Engraved by A. Cardon

R. L. EDGEWORTH

1812.

London, Richard Bentley, 1844

MEMOIRS

OF

RICHARD LOVELL EDGEWORTH,

ESQ.

BEGUN BY HIMSELF,

AND CONCLUDED BY HIS DAUGHTER,

MARIA EDGEWORTH.

THIRD EDITION.

LONDON:

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PREFACE TO THIRD EDITION.

NEARLY a quarter of a century has elapsed since these Memoirs first appeared in two volumes. In revising the book for a new edition, the two volumes have been compressed into one. The part written by my father I have left untouched, having been assured by many readers, and by those on whose judgment I ought most to rely, that it is interesting.

The volume which I added has been nearly re-written, in order to bring it into due proportion, giving only what is necessary to complete the view of my father's life and character in as few words as I possibly could. I hope this part may not be found long and heavy, that it may not defeat my object, and prevent these Memoirs from being read with satisfaction and profit by the rising generation.

And now, in my 77th year — this being probably the last time that I shall venture to address the public—I take leave of my kind readers with feelings of the most sincere respect and gratitude.

MARIA EDGEWORTH.

London,
April 1844.

INTRODUCTION.

I WRITE my life, not because it contains extraordinary adventures, any uncommon series of good or bad fortune, any instances of superior talents, or heroic virtues; but, because from habits acquired in educating a large family, I can develope with some certainty the circumstances which have formed my character, and influenced my conduct.

My beloved daughter, Maria, at my earnest request, has promised to revise, complete, and publish her father's life.

Were she to perceive any extenuation on the one hand, or exaggeration on the other, it would wound her feelings; she would be obliged to alter, or omit, what she did not approve, and her affection for her friend and parent would be diminished:—can the public have a better surety than this, for the accuracy of these memoirs?

In relating the life of any man who has never lived in absolute obscurity, some of the history of others must be interspersed. To steer between the extremes of too much or too little, of what is not strictly the history of the writer, is difficult. Some of my readers may think that I say too much of my friends; and some may blame me for having omitted many particulars, relative to distinguished characters, which might have amused the public. The candid critic

will be aware of these difficulties, and will be most likely to absolve me.

A slight narrative of my own feelings and actions may instruct and entertain those, who are curious in discriminating human character; and it may farther be of use, to shew that education continues from the cradle to the grave, or, to speak more accurately, from infancy to dotage;—Public and private events bias our conduct at every period of life; and I believe, because I feel, that the memory, and every faculty of what are called the heart and understanding, may not only be preserved, but may be improved, by care and attention, even between sixty and seventy, as well as between forty and fifty years of age.

I now take leave of the world, which has been most indulgent to me, as a man, and as an author, and I take leave of the world with this declaration,—that, to speak the truth without harshness, is, in my opinion, the most certain way to succeed in every honourable pursuit.

Whoever chuses to follow what is not honourable, must adopt more suitable advice.

CHAPTER I.

[1583.

My family came into Ireland in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, about the year 1583; they had been established, as I have been told, at Edgeworth, now called Edgeware, in Middlesex.

Edward Edgeworth, who was bishop of Down and Connor in Ireland in the year 1593, dying without issue, left his fortune to his brother, Francis, who was Clerk of the Hanaper, in 1619. This gentleman, from whom I am lineally descended, married an Irish lady, Jane Tuite, a daughter of Sir Edmond Tuite, Knight, of Sonna, in the county of Westmeath. She was very beautiful, and of an ancient family. It happened, that being once obliged to give place at church to some lady whom she thought her inferior, she pressed her husband to take out a Baronet's patent which had been prepared for him. At this time these patents were, as he expressed it, "more onerous than honourable;" and he refused to comply with his wife's request. The lady, waxing wroth, declared she would never go again to church—the gentleman ungallantly replied, that she might stay or go wherever she pleased. In consequence of this permission, which she took in the largest sense, she attached herself to Queen Henrietta Maria, with whom she continued in France, during the remainder of the Queen's life. Upon her husband's refusing the Baronet's patent, she obtained it for her brother,

Sir Edmond Tuite. She returned to Ireland afterwards, at Queen Henrietta Maria's death; but she disregarded her husband's family and her own, and laid out a very large fortune, in founding a religious house in Dublin.

Her son, Captain John Edgeworth, married the daughter of Sir Hugh Cullum, of Derbyshire. He brought her to Ireland, to his Castle of Cranallagh, in the county of Longford. He had by her one son. Before the Irish rebellion broke out, in 1641, Captain Edgeworth, not aware of the immediate danger, left his wife and infant in the Castle of Cranallagh, while he was summoned to a distance by some military duty. During his absence, the rebels rose, attacked the castle, set fire to it at night, and dragged the lady out, literally naked. She escaped from their hands, and hid herself under a furze bush, till they had dispered. By what means she saved herself from the fury of the rebels, I never heard; she made her way to Dublin, thence to England, and to her father's house in Derbyshire. After the rebels had forced this lady out of the castle, and had set fire to it, they plundered it completely; but they were persuaded to extinguish the fire from reverence for the picture of Jane Edgeworth. Her portrait was painted on the wainscoat, with a cross hanging from her neck, and a rosary in her hands. Being a catholic, and having founded a religious house, she was considered as a saint. The only son of Captain Edgeworth was then an infant, lying in his cradle. One of the rebels seized the child by the leg, and was in the act of swinging him round to dash his brains out against the corner of the castle wall, when an Irish servant of the lowest order, stopped his hand, claiming the right of

killing the little heretick himself, and swearing that a sudden death would be too good for him; that he would plunge him up to the throat in a bog-hole, and leave him for the crows to pick his eyes out. Snatching the child from his comrade, he ran off with it to a neighbouring bog, and thrust it into the mud; but, when the rebels had retired, this man, who had only pretended to join them, went back to the bog for the boy, preserved his life, and, contriving to hide him in a pannier under eggs and chickens, carried him actually through the midst of the rebel camp, safely to Dublin. This faithful servant's name was Bryan Ferral. His last descendant died within my memory, after having lived, and been supported always, under my father's protection. My father heard this story from Lady Edgeworth, his grandmother, and also from a man of 107 years of age, one Bryan Simpson, who was present when the attack was made on Cranallagh Castle, and by whom the facts were circumstantially detailed.

Mrs. Edgeworth, the daughter of Sir Hugh Cullum, lived but a few years after her return to her father's house in Derbyshire. Her husband, Captain John Edgeworth, had followed her to England. Some time after he was left a widower, he determined to return to reside in Ireland. On his way thither, he stopped a day at Chester, it being Christmas day. He went to the Cathedral, and there he was struck with the sight of a lady, who had a full blown rose in her bosom. This lady was Mrs. Bridgman, widow of Mr. Edward Bridgman, brother to Sir Orlando Bridgman, the Lord Keeper. As she was coming out of church, the rose fell at Captain Edgeworth's feet. The lady was handsome—so was the captain: he took

up the rose, and presented it with so much grace to Mrs. Bridgman, that, in consequence they became acquainted, and were soon after married. They came over to Ireland. Captain Edgeworth had a son, as I have mentioned, by his former wife, and the widow Bridgman had a daughter, by her former husband. The daughter was heiress to her father's property. These young people fell in love with each other. The mother was averse to the match. To avoid the law against running away with an heiress, the lovers settled, that the young lady should take her lover to church behind her on horseback. Their marriage was effected. Their first son, Francis, was born before the joint ages of his father and mother amounted to thirty-one years.

After the death of Captain Edgeworth and his wife, which happened before this young couple had arrived at years of discretion, John Edgeworth took possession of a considerable estate in Ireland, and of an estate in England, in Lancashire, which came to him in right of his wife; he had also ten thousand pounds in money, as her fortune. But they were extravagant, and quite ignorant of the management of money. Upon an excursion to England, they mortgaged their estate in Lancashire, and carried the money to London, in a stocking, which they kept on the top of their bed. To this stocking, both wife and husband had free access, and of course its contents soon began to be very low. The young man was handsome, and very fond of dress. At one time, when he had run out all his cash, he actually sold the ground plot of a house in Dublin, to purchase a high-crowned hat and feathers, which was then the mode. He lived in high company in London, and at court.

Upon some occasion, King Charles the Second insisted upon knighting him. His lady was presented at court, where she was so much taken notice of by the gallant Monarch, that she thought it proper to intimate to her husband, that she did not wish to go there a second time, nor did she ever after appear at court, though in the bloom of youth and beauty. She returned to Ireland. This was an instance of prudence, as well as of strength of mind, which could hardly have been expected from the improvident temper she had shewn at first setting out in life. In this lady's character there was an extraordinary mixture of strength and weakness. She was courageous beyond the habits of her sex in real danger, and yet afraid of imaginary beings. According to the superstition of the times, she believed in fairies. Opposite to her husband's Castle of Lissard, in Ireland, and within view of the windows, there is a mount, which was reputed to be the resort of fairies; and when Lady Edgeworth resided alone at Lissard, the common people of the neighbourhood, either for amusement, or with the intention of frightening her away, sent children by night to this mount, who by their strange noises, by singing, and the lights they shewed from time to time, terrified her exceedingly. But she did not quit the place. The mount was called Fairy-Mount, since abbreviated into *Fir* mount.*

Of the courage and presence of mind of this Lady

* *Firmount.* From which in after times the Abbé Edgeworth, to whose branch of the family this part of the estate descended, called himself M. de Firmont.

The Abbé was Lady Edgeworth's grandson. Her fifth son, Essex Edgeworth, was the Abbé's father.

Edgeworth, who was so much afriaid of fairies, I will now give an instance. While she was living at Lissard, she was, on some sudden alarm, obliged to go at night to a garret at the top of the house, for some gunpowder, which was kept there in a barrel. She was followed up stairs by an ignorant servant girl, who carried a bit of candle without a candlestick, between her fingers. When Lady Edgeworth had token what gunpowder she wanted, had locked the door, and was half-way down stairs again, she observed, that the girl had not her candle, and asked what she had done with it; the girl recollected and answered, that she had left it "*stuck in the barrel of black salt.*" Lady Edgeworth bid her stand still, and instantly returned by herself to the room where the gunpowder was; found the candle as the girl had described—put her hand carefully underneath it—carried it safely out; and when she got to the bottom of the stairs, dropped on her knees, and thanked God for their deliverance. This lady, with all her courage and virtue, had a violent temper, which brought on family quarrels between her and her husband, and her many sons: so that the very early marriage, which I have mentioned, turned out unhappily. She recurred continually to the large fortune which she had brought her husband, and complained of being treated with neglect. As he grew older, Sir John became more prudent as to money matters. He pushed his fortune at court, and having considerable talents both as a courtier and a soldier, he obtained various places of trust and profit, and at last divided a large landed property among eight sons, leaving also a handsome jointure for his widow. The jointure lay upon the

part of his estate that went to his eldest son, Colonel Francis Edgeworth, who consequently was not rich. Lady Edgeworth lived till she was ninety.

Francis Edgeworth, her eldest son, was my grandfather. He was a loyal man and a zealous protestant, so much so, that he was called *Protestant Frank.* In his youth, he raised a regiment for King William, which, when he had completed, he gave up to his father, Sir John, who required it from him. A memorandum of an intended grant from the crown, of three thousand pounds, on account of the expense of raising this regiment, and as an acknowledgment for the service, still remains (unpaid) among our family papers. My grandfather became colonel of the regiment after his father's death. He was a man of great wit and gaiety, fond of his profession, quite a soldier, and totally regardless of money. He married successively several wives. One of whom, an English lady, was a widow Bradstone. Again, as in a former instance, which I have mentioned, the widow had a daughter, and a beautiful daughter, by her first husband. This daughter, Miss Bradstone, my father's half sister, married Thomas Pakenham, father to the first, and great grandfather to the present Lord Longford. Thus we became connected with the Pakenham family. Colonel Francis Edgeworth, besides being straitened in his circumstances, by having for many years a large jointure to pay to his mother, was involved in difficulties by his own taste for play. A taste, which, from indulgence, became an irresistible passion. One night, after having lost all the money he could command, he staked his wife's diamond earrings, and went into an adjoining room, where she was sitting in company, to ask her to lend them to

him. She took them from her ears, and gave them to him, saying, that she knew for what purpose he wanted them, and that he was welcome to them. They were played for. My grandfather won upon this last stake, and gained back all he had lost that night. In the warmth of his gratitude to his wife, he, at her desire, took an oath, that he would never more play at any game with cards or dice. Some time afterwards, he was found in a hay-yard with a friend, drawing straws out of the hayrick, and betting upon which should be the longest!—As might be expected, he lived in alternate extravagance and distress; sometimes with a coach and four, and sometimes in very want of half a crown.

These anecdotes were told to my father by Lady Edgeworth, that widow of Sir John, who lived till ninety, and who related to him many curious anecdotes of the five reigns during which she flourished. From her traditions, and from letters and papers, now in my possession, my father compiled some manuscript memoirs, from which I was tempted here to make further extracts, illustrative of the manners of the times. Thinking, however, that they would take up more room than could properly be spared in this narrative, I omit all which do not immediately relate to my own family.

Colonel Francis Edgeworth left his affairs in such disorder at his death, that his son, my father, who was then an orphan of but eight years old, must have lost his whole property, had not Mr. Pakenham, his guardian, taken care of him and of it. Mr. Pakenham, though related to my father only by the half blood, was as kind to him, as it was possible for the most affectionate parent to be. Perceiving that my

father was of an uncommonly steady disposition, Mr. Pakenham advised him to go to the Temple, at eighteen, instead of going to college. This prudent counsel my father followed, and by application to business, and by making himself master of his own affairs, he recovered a considerable part of his estate, which had been unjustly detained from him by some of his own family. He told me a singular detection of fraud in one of the suits, in which he was engaged: a deed was produced against him, which was witnessed by a very old man, who was brought into court. His venerable aspect prepossessed the court strongly in favour of his veracity: he said that he was an antient servant of the Edgeworth family, and had been accustomed to transcribe papers for the gentleman who had executed the deed. He began, by declaring, that he had foreseen from the particular circumstances of the deed, which went to disinherit the heir of the family, that the transaction might hereafter be brought into dispute; he had, therefore, he said, privately put a sixpence under the seal of the deed, which would appear if the seal were broken. The seal was broken in open court, and the sixpence was found to be dated five years subsequent to the date of the deed!—The deed being thus proved to be a forgery, my father gained his suit.

In a few years, my father found himself in easy circumstances; and in 1732 he married Jane Lovell, daughter of Samuel Lovell, a Welsh judge, who was son of Sir Salathiel Lovell, that recorder of London, who, at the trial of the seven bishops, in the reign of James II., proved himself to be a good man, though he was but an indifferent lawyer. He lived to the age of ninety-four, and had so much lost his memory,

as to be called the *obliviscor* of London. Of him I have heard my father relate an anecdote, which has been told of others:—a young lawyer pleading before him was so rude as to say, "Sir, you have forgotten the law;"—He replied, "Young man, I have forgotten more law, than you will ever remember."

My grandfather, the Welsh judge, travelling over the sands near Beaumorris, as he was going circuit, was overtaken by the night, and by the tide: his coach was set fast in a quick-sand; the water soon rose into the coach, and his register, and some other attendants, crept out of the windows and mounted on the roof, and on the coach-box. The judge let the water rise to his very lips, and with becoming gravity replied, to all the earnest entreaties of his attendants, "I will follow your counsel, if you can quote any precedent for a judge's mounting a coach-box."

CHAPTER II.

[1744.

After my father's marriage with Miss Lovell, he retired from the profession of the law, and became a country gentleman. He had eight children; four of whom died during their childhood. My elder brother Thomas, my elder sister Mary, and Margaret, a sister younger than myself, survived. I was born in Pierrepoint street, Bath, in the year 1744. By some mismanagement my poor mother, at my birth, lost the use of her right side, a misfortune that was the more severely felt by her, as she had been a remarkably active person. From a sprightly young woman, who danced and rode uncommonly well, she in one hour became a cripple for life.

My mother then taught me to read herself. I lent my little soul to the business, and I read fluently before I was six years old. The first books that were put into my hands were the Old Testament and Æsop's Fables. Æsop's Fables were scarcely intelligible to me: the frogs and their kings,— the fox and the bunch of grapes, confused my understanding; and the satyr and the traveller appeared to be absolute nonsense. I understood the lion and the mouse, and was charmed with the generous conduct of the one, and with the gratitude of the other. When I began to read the Old Testament, the creation made a great impression upon my mind: I personified the

Deity, as is usual with ignorance. A particular part of my father's garden was paradise: my imagination represented Adam as walking in this garden; and the whole history became a drama in my mind. I pitied Adam, was angry with Eve, and I most cordially hated the devil. What was meant by Adam's bruising the serpent's head, I could not comprehend, and I frequently asked for explanations. The history of Joseph and his brethren I perfectly understood; it seized fast hold of my imagination, and of my feelings. I admired and loved Joseph with enthusiasm; and I believe, that the impression, which this history made upon my mind, continued for many years to have an influence upon my conduct.

My only play-fellow in my early childhood was my younger sister Margaret; my elder sister was four years older than I was. The early attachment which was formed between my sister Margaret (now Mrs. John Ruxton) and me, has been one of the most constant sources of pleasure that I have ever possessed. There was and is a great resemblance in our tempers, and characters, and tastes. I know how highly I praise myself in saying this, but it must be true, or we could not through so many different scenes of life have preserved as perfect a friendship and affection for each other, as ever existed between brother and sister.

My mother took various means early to give me honourable feelings and good principles; and by these she endeavoured to correct, and to teach me to govern, the violence of my natural temper. She was lame, and not able to subdue me by force: if I ran away from her when she was going to punish me, she could not follow and catch me; but she obtained

such power over my mind, that she induced me to come to her to be punished whenever she required it. I resigned myself, and without a struggle submitted to the chastisement she thought proper to inflict. The consequence of this submission was my acquiring, if I may say so, the *esteem* as well as the affection of my mother. But she was not blind to my faults: she saw the danger of my passionate temper. It was a difficult task to correct it; though perfectly submissive to her, I was with others rebellious and outrageous in my anger. My mother heard continual complaints of me; yet she wisely forbore to lecture or punish me for every trifling misdemeanour; she seized proper occasions to make a strong impression upon my mind.

One day, my elder brother Tom, who was almost a man when I was a little child, came into the nursery where I was playing, and where the maids were ironing. Upon some slight provocation or contradiction from him, I flew into a violent passion; and, snatching up one of the box-irons, which the maid had just laid down, I flung it across the table at my brother. He stooped instantly; and, thank God! it missed him. There was a red hot heater in it, of which I knew nothing till I saw it thrown out, and till I heard the scream from the maids. They seized me, and dragged me down stairs to my mother. Knowing that she was extremely fond of my brother, and that she was of a warm indignant temper, they expected that signal vengeance would burst upon me. They all spoke at once. When my mother heard what I had done, I saw she was struck with horror, but she said not one word in anger to me. She ordered every body out of the room except myself,

and then drawing me near her, she spoke to me in a mild voice, but in a most serious manner. First, she explained to me the nature of the crime, which I had run the hazard of committing; she told me, she was sure that I had no intention seriously to hurt my brother, and did not know, that if the iron had hit my brother, it must have killed him. While I felt this first shock, and whilst the horror of murder was upon me, my mother seized the moment, to conjure me to try in future to command my passions. I remember her telling me, that I had an uncle by the mother's side who had such a violent temper, that in a fit of passion one of his eyes actually started out of its socket. "You," said my mother to me, "have naturally a violent temper: if you grow up to be a man without learning to govern it, it will be impossible for you then to command yourself; and there is no knowing what crime you may in a fit of passion commit, and how miserable you may in consequence of it become. You are but a very young child, yet I think you can understand me. Instead of speaking to you as I do at this moment, I might punish you severely; but I think it better to treat you like a reasonable creature. My wish is to teach you to command your temper: nobody can do that for you so well as you can do it for yourself."

As nearly as I can recollect, these were my mother's words; I am certain this was the sense of what she then said to me. The impression made by the earnest solemnity with which she spoke, never, during the whole course of my life, was effaced from my mind. From that moment I determined to govern my temper. The determinations and the good resolutions of a boy of between five and six years

old, are not much to be depended upon, and I do not mean to boast, that mine were thenceforward uniformly kept; but I am conscious that my mother's warning frequently recurred to me, when I felt the passion of anger rising within me; and that both whilst I was a child, and after I became a man, these her words of early advice had most powerful and salutary influence in restraining my temper.

Of the further rudiments of my education I recollect only that I was taught arithmetic, and made expert in counting at the card table, when my father and mother used to play cribbage. The attention to teach me numbers was bestowed particularly, because my father, not being infected with that foolish pride which renders parents averse to the idea of putting a son *into business* or *commerce*, destined me for a merchant. My elder brother, however, dying when I was but six years old, I became an only son. The views of my education changed, and my life was now to be preserved by an increased degree of care and precaution. I cannot say that my dear mother, though she was a woman of superior abilities, made much use of her judgment with respect to the management of my health, or to the education of my body. Her fondness for my elder brother was soon transferred to me; and to prevent whatever might endanger my health, continually occupied her thoughts. At this time the humoral pathology was the creed of physicians, and of those well-meaning ladies, who watch over the constitutions of their children, and endeavour, by continual preventives, to avert every approach of disease. I was naturally strong and active; but I was now obliged to take a course of physic twice a year, every Spring and

Autumn, with nine days' potions of small beer and rhubarb, to fortify my stomach, and to kill imaginary worms. I was not suffered to feel the slightest inclemency of the weather; I was muffled up whenever I was permitted to ride a mile or two on horseback before the coachman; my feet never brushed the dew, nor was my head ever exposed to the wind or sun. Fortunately, my mother's knowledge of the human mind far exceeded her skill in medicine.

She inspired me with a love of truth, a dislike of low company, and an admiration of whatever was generous. Fortunately for me, the few visitors who frequented our house, seemed to join with her in a wish to instil generous sentiments. One lady in particular, who, as I observed, was treated by my mother with much respect, made a salutary impression upon me. She gave me Gay's Fables with prints, with which I was much delighted; and desired me to get by heart the fable of the Lion and the Cub. She explained to me the design of this fable, which was within the compass of my understanding. It gave me early the notion that I ought to dislike low company, and to despise the applause of the vulgar. Some traits in the history of Cyrus, which was read to me, seized my imagination, and, next to Joseph in the Old Testament, Cyrus became the favorite of my childhood. My sister and I used to amuse ourselves with playing Cyrus at the court of his grandfather Astyages. At the great Persian feasts I was, like young Cyrus, to set an example of temperance, to eat nothing but water-cresses, to drink nothing but water, and to reprove the cup-bearer for making the king my grandfather drunk. To this day I remember the

taste of those water-cresses; and for those who love to trace the characters of men in the sports of children, I may mention, that my character for sobriety, if not for water-drinking, has continued through life.

At seven years old, I became very devout. I had read some of the New Testament, and some account of the sufferings of martyrs; these inflamed my imagination so much, that I remember weeping bitterly before I was eight years old, because I lived at a time when I had no opportunity of being a martyr. I however dared to think for myself—My father was about this time enclosing a garden; part of the wall in its progress afforded means for climbing to the top of it, which I soon effected. My father reprimanded me severely, and as no fruit was at that time ripe, he could not readily conceive what motive I could have for taking so much trouble, and running so great a risk. I told him truly, that I had no motive but the pleasure of climbing. I added, that if the garden were full of ripe peaches, it would be a much greater temptation; and that unless he should be certain that nobody *would* climb over the wall, he ought not to have peaches in the garden. After having talked to me for some time, he discovered that I had reasoned thus: if my father knows beforehand, that the temptation of peaches will necessarily induce me to climb over the garden wall; and that, if I do, it is more than probable that I shall break my neck, I shall not be guilty of any crime, but my father will be the cause of my breaking my neck. This I applied to Adam, without at the time being able to perceive the great difference between things human and divine. My father, feeling that

he was not prepared to give me a satisfactory answer to this difficulty, judiciously declined the contest, and desired me not to meddle with what was above my comprehension. I mention this, because all parents who encourage their children to speak freely, often hear from them puzzling questions and observations; and I wish to point out, that on such occasions children should not be discouraged, but, on the contrary, according to the advice of Rousseau, parents should fairly and truly confess their ignorance.

So strong were my religious feelings at this time of my life, that I strenuously believed, that if I had sufficient faith, I could remove mountains; and accordingly I prayed for the objects of my childish wishes with the utmost fervency, and with the strongest persuasion that my prayers would be heard. How long the fervor of this sort of devotion lasted I do not remember; but I suppose that going to school insensibly allayed it.

Before I was ready for school, other circumstances occurred which had considerable influence on my future character. The first was my mother's reading to me some passages from Shakespeare's plays, marking the characters of Coriolanus and of Julius Cæsar, which she admired. The contempt which Coriolanus expresses for the opinion and applause of the vulgar, for "the voices of the greasy-headed multitude," suited well with that disdain for low company, with which I had been first inspired by the fable of the Lion and the Cub. It is probable that I understood the speeches of Coriolanus but imperfectly; yet I know, that I sympathised with my mother's admiration, my young spirit was touched by his noble character, by his generosity, and, above all, by his

filial piety, and his gratitude to his mother. My mother took every occasion to strengthen the impression this character made on my mind. She was herself of a generous and grateful disposition, and any instance of gratitude called forth her warm approbation. She considered gratitude as the strongest mark of a generous character: she thought, that to give or to forgive is generous; but that to remember and to return favors is more difficult than to confer them. In conferring benefits the will is free, the mind acts from warm spontaneous exertion, a sense of superiority accompanies the action; but the feeling of gratitude implies a sense of obligation, and perhaps of inferiority. There are but few who have been habituated to think that to pay a debt is more agreeable than to bestow a favor. But in the same degree that a full and warm return for benefits is uncommon, we are pleased with ourselves for fulfilling this duty; and in fact, whoever has been often grateful, must have experienced as much self-satisfaction as the most liberal man upon earth can feel in sharing his fortune, or in bestowing his exertions to promote the interests of others.

I have mentioned, that my mother, even while I was but a child of eight years old, was in the habit of treating me like a reasonable being. She began to point out to me the good or bad qualities of the persons whom we accidentally saw, or with whom we were connected. About this time, one of our relations, a remarkably handsome youth of eighteen or nineteen, came one day to dine with us; my father was from home, and I had an opportunity of seeing the manners of this young man. He was quite uninformed; my mother told me, that he had received no

education, that he was a hard drinker, and that notwithstanding his handsome appearance, he would be good for nothing. Her prediction was soon verified. He married a woman of inferior station, when he was scarcely twenty. His wife's numerous grown-up family, father, brothers, and cousins, were taken into his house. They appeared, wherever any public meeting gave them an opportunity, in a handsome coach with four beautiful grey horses; the men were dressed in laced clothes after the fashion of those days, and his wife's relations lived luxuriously at his house for two or three years. In that period of time they dissipated the fee-simple of twelve hundred pounds a year, which, fifty years ago, was equal at least to three thousand of our present money. The quantity of claret which these parasites swallowed was so extraordinary, that when the accounts of this foolish youth came before the chancellor, his lordship disallowed a great part of the wine-merchant's bill; adding, that had the gentleman's coach-horses drunk claret, so much as had been charged could not have been consumed. This wine-merchant, however, obtained a considerable portion of the poor young man's estate, in liquidation of the outstanding debt. The host had for some time partaken of the good cheer in his own house; but disease, loss of appetite, and want of relish for jovial companions, soon confined him to his own apartment, which happened to be over the dining parlour, where he heard the noisy merriment below. In this solitary situation, a basin of bread and milk was one day brought to him, in which he observed an unusual quantity of hard black crusts of bread. He objected to them, and upon inquiry was told, that they were the refuse crusts that had

been cut off a loaf, of which a pudding had been made for dinner. This instance of neglect and ingratitude stung him to the quick; he threw the basin from him, and exclaimed, "*I deserve it.*" To be denied a crumb of bread in his own house, where his wife's whole family were at that instant rioting at his expense, "quite conquered him." He never held his head up afterwards, but in a few months died, leaving a large family totally unprovided with fortune, to the guidance of a mother, who kept them destitute of any sort of instruction. These circumstances, and especially the anecdote of the basin of bread and milk, made too deep an impression on my mind, tending to inspire me with too great scepticism as to the gratitude of mankind. This opinion has, however, been in some degree effaced by experience; and I am now persuaded, that more ingratitude arises from the injudicious conduct of benefactors, than from the want of proper feeling in those whom they have obliged.

When the affairs of my relation were, at his death, the subject of conversation, my mother observed to me, that the cause of all the misfortunes that befel him was an easiness of temper, that led him to yield to every creature who attempted to persuade him. She desired me to remember, that young men are led into a thousand inconveniences from a false shame, that prevents them from refusing to do as others do; that the character for good nature, which it is so common to admire and to imitate, is not always obtained by real acts of generosity, or by real feelings of good-will, but by mere undistinguishing easiness of temper—that people of this temper, well aware of their own weakness, join with apparent eagerness in

every proposal which *shews spirit.* She observed, that where the cry of numbers hurries us on, we may shew good fellowship, and even sympathy; but we do not deserve to be applauded for *spirit.* Real spirit is shown in resisting importunity and examples, and in daring to do what we think right, independently of the opinion of others.

But to return to the history of my childhood.—When I was about seven years old, a circumstance happened, which had considerable effect in forming the principal taste of my life, though at first view it seemed to concern me but little. A gentleman and his wife, on their way to Dublin, were delayed by the sickness of the lady at a wretched inn at Edgeworth Town. My mother not only sent what was proper, but invited the distressed travellers to her house, and took such effectual care of the sick lady, that in a few days she recovered, and pursued her journey. When my mother went some time afterwards to Dublin, she took me with her. Mr. Deane, the husband of the sick lady, came to see my mother; and, as he got out of his coach, I observed, that he had brought with him a nice mahogany table; and some uncommon pieces of machinery, which excited my curiosity not a little. These were the parts of an electrical machine, that Mr. Deane had made, and which he presented to my mother, in hopes that it might be of service in alleviating the effects of the palsy, with which she was affected. The benevolent countenance, melodious voice, and grateful conduct of this gentleman, made a great impression on my young mind. I was permitted, after much entreaty, to be present whilst the experiment was going on. At this time electricity was but little known in Ireland, and its

fame as a cure for palsy had been considerably magnified. It, as usual, excited some sensation in the paralytic limb on the first trials. One of the experiments on my mother failed of producing a shock, and Mr. Deane seemed at a loss to account for it. I had observed that the wire, which was used to conduct the electric fluid, had, as it hung in a curve from the instrument to my mother's arm, touched the hinge of a table which was in the way, and I had the courage to mention this circumstance, which was the real cause of failure. Mr. Deane was so well pleased with my observation, that he took me up in his arms, kissed me, and invited me to come the next morning to see his study and his workshop. I was sent there at the hour appointed, and the good-natured philosopher condescended to answer a number of questions, which my eager curiosity suggested. The apartment and its contents are now present to my memory, though it is near sixty years since I was there. Mr. Deane was then making an orrery, which he afterwards bequeathed to the University of Dublin. This orrery instantly caught my attention, but as its uses could not be explained to me, he very wisely turned my attention to another object, and shewed me the engine for cutting teeth in clock-wheels. He was then finishing some large wheels for his orrery, and he explained the parts and the uses of the engine so clearly, that I soon understood them. He then showed me a large globe, with which I was much pleased. I had been used to examine the map of the world upon a great screen at home; but though I had seen a map, I had not seen a globe, and I recollect, that when I found Italy, Sicily, and Ireland, upon the globe, I was delighted with the new idea

which I received of the relative situation of places on the earth. Mr. Deane shewed me the use of several tools, which are employed by the makers of mathematical instruments; he shewed me a syphon, and the parts of a clock; he melted some metal for me in a crucible; he explained to me the bellows, and construction of an organ. He bestowed praise upon my attention, and upon what he was pleased to call my intelligence; so that from the pleasure I received, and the impression made upon my mind that morning, I became irrecoverably a mechanic. These are circumstances in themselves so trifling, that I should not think of relating them, were it not to shew in one instance, at least, the truth of what I have elsewhere asserted, that what is usually called in children a genius for any particular art or science is nothing more than the effect of some circumstance, that makes an early impression, either from a strong association of pleasure or pain: such circumstances are most commonly accidental; but sometimes they are purposely thrown in the way, to produce a particular propensity in youth.

CHAPTER III.

[1752.

One of the great eras in a boy's life now approached; —an introduction to the rudiments of ancient learning.—A clergyman of the neighbouring village was engaged to teach me the Latin grammar. This gentleman was the Reverend Patrick Hughes, who had the honour of leading Goldsmith and some other conspicuous literary characters over the threshold of learning. He put into my hands, without any previous inauguration, that universal book of knowledge, Lilly's Grammar. Never can I forget the amazement, or rather the stupor, which overwhelmed my mind, when I read, and attempted to learn by heart, the first definition in this learned manual. By pure dint of reiteration, I got my lessons with tolerable success; but I am satisfied, that my pedagogue augured ill of the young squire. I, however, like other boys, drudged on through thick and thin. I got through *Tristis* (sad) without any misfortune; but the first and only punishment I ever suffered in the cause of classical literature was occasioned by *Felix* (happy), and I well recollect the cause of my failure and disgrace. While I learned my lesson by rote, I had the trick of standing upon one leg, buckling and unbuckling my shoe. When I came to repeat my lesson, my master insisted upon my standing still and on both legs. My memory was directly

at a fault. My associations were broken, and I could not go on, through *hic hæc et hoc felix*, without taking up my forbidden foot. A *good* whipping, as it is called, cured me of the trick, and of what *appeared to be* obstinacy or stupidity. After a few months' preparatory discipline, I was taken to school at Warwick, and placed under the care of Dr. Lydiat, on the 26th of August, 1752, a day memorable to me. A new world now opened to my view. I was about eight years old; I had been bred up with much tenderness, and had never before lived with any companions but my sisters. The noise, and bustle, and roughness of my school-fellows, at first confounded me; I had been sufficiently tainted with Irish accent, and Irish idiom, to be the object of much open ridicule, and much secret contempt. I beat one boy, who was taller than myself, for mocking me; and in a short time I acquired the English provincial accent of my companions so effectually, as to give no fair pretence for tormenting me on this subject; but I still retained the name of *Little Irish*, which would have continued to be my nick-name, but for a slight circumstance, of which I made happy advantage. The races at Warwick inflamed my companions with the love for racing. A famous match, I believe, in the year 1752, between *Little-witch* and *Little-driver*, occupied the attention of all the grown and growing children of the neighbourhood. One of the captains of the school, my worthy friend Frank Mundy, of Markeaton, in Derbyshire, matched me to run against a boy, my superior in age, and famous for agility. Fortunately, this boy was for the occasion named *Little-witch;* I declared, that I would not run, unless the name of "*Little-driver*" was given to me. I won the race, and the name of *Little-driver*

necessarily superseded that of *Little Irish*. Nicknames are disagreeable appendages, and care should be taken to prevent or shake them off. I have known a young man of eminence kept for a long time below his level amongst his companions, from his having succeeded to a nickname that his elder brother had acquired, from some circumstance in his conduct, which was in no manner whatever connected with the younger brother's character, or with the real estimation in which he was held by his schoolfellows. At Warwick I learned not only the first rudiments of grammar, but also the rudiments of that knowledge, which leads us to observe the difference of tempers and characters in our fellow creatures. The marking how widely they differ, and by what minute varieties they are distinguished, continues to the end of life, an inexhaustable subject of discrimination!

I had been accustomed to the affection of all my family at home, and was totally unacquainted with that love of power and of tyranny, which seems almost innate in certain minds. A full grown boy, just ready for college, made it his favourite amusement to harass the minds, and torment the bodies, of his younger school-fellows. A little boy, with remarkably long flaxen hair, and myself, were the chosen objects of his cruelty; he used to knot our hair together, and drag us up and down the school-room stairs, for his diversion. One evening, when Dr. Lydiat, and all the boys, excepting my tormentor and myself, had gone to church, he caught me, and confining me with iron grasp between his knees, he pulled a small black box from his pocket, which, with a terrific voice and countenance, he informed me was filled with dead men's fat; with the fat of a man who had lately been

hanged; this he invited me to eat, and upon my refusing to do so with manifest signs of horror and disgust, he crammed my mouth with it till I was nearly suffocated.—The box contained, it is true, nothing but spermaceti, but to me it was dreadful as poison. A few days afterwards, when the tart woman came, he again seized me, and again attempted to cram my mouth with the contents of his accursed box, instead of permitting me to regale myself with damson tart. Roused to desperate resistance, I struck him in the face with my utmost strength; he, of course, knocked me down so decidedly, as to make it doubtful whether I should ever get up again. Another schoolfellow of mine was present, Christopher Wren, grandson of the great Sir Christopher. Though far inferior in strength and size to my tormentor, Wren could not restrain his indignation from venting itself in terms, that immediately produced a blow. A battle ensued, which would, as the spectators said, have terminated in favour of my champion, if it had continued; but I had run into the room where Dr. Lydiat was, an action of no common daring, and informed him of the combat. Wren met with the applause which was due to his humanity and courage, not only from his master, but from his schoolfellows. From me he won my warmest affection, which never ceased while he lived, and which, in the sixty-fifth year of my life, continues so strongly impressed on my memory, that I feel a prepossession in favour of every person of his name—a prepossession which has never disappointed me, whenever I have become acquainted with any of the descendants of our immortal architect. That one of the most amiable virtues of human nature was pos-

sessed by his son, is proved by the publication of Parentalia, in which the history of the author's father and of his works, is given with internal evidence of truth, with the highest reverence for his ancestor, and yet without a single circumstance of exaggeration. Every reader, who has at any period of his life received protection from injustice and oppression, will sympathise with my feelings of gratitude.

My father and his family were at Bath when my first Christmas holidays approached. Travelling in England was at that time very different from what it is at present; to send to Warwick for me, and to convey me back again was inconvenient. I therefore, must have remained at school, had not Mrs. Dewes*, sister to Mrs. Delany, taken compassion upon me. Mrs. Dewes lived at Welsbourne, within four miles of Warwick, where her four sons were at school with me. The youngest was my class fellow, and upon a visit, which Mrs. Dewes paid to Dr. Lydiat, she saw me, and wrote to my mother at Bath, to obtain her consent to my passing the holidays at Welsbourne. Fortunately, some former connexion which had subsisted between my mother and Mrs. Delany, smoothed all difficulties; I was permitted to accept the invitation, and I was received by Mrs. Dewes with the utmost kindness and cordiality. Old English hospitality never appeared to me to be exercised with more propriety than at Welsbourne. The tenants of Mr. Dewes were invited to a Christmas dinner of excellent cheer, and their wives and daughters passed the evening in mirth and *unreproved pleasure*. The fiddle and a good supper sent

* This lady's name is mentioned with eulogium in Mrs. Barbauld's preface to Richardson's works.

all the young people happy to their homes; and Mrs. Dewes's cheerful and instructive conversation spread universal satisfaction among the elder part of the company. This scene is still present to my recollection. Three Miss Shendalls, tall, handsome girls from Stratford, were inmates for some days at Welsbourne. They were obviously superior to the generality of the visitors; their conversation with Mrs. Dewes was generally upon what they were reading; and as they sat round a table every evening intent upon their books, my young friends and I, from imitation, employed ourselves in perusing certain little volumes, which were then printed by Newberry, for children, or we deciphered anagrams, which Mrs. Dewes and her friends gave us for our amusement. To this occupation we were much encouraged by the attention which the elder part of the company gave to the subject, when a difficult combination of letters fell in their way. Upon such slight circumstances as these the first taste for different pursuits in life are formed, and to a number of concurring circumstances of this sort I owed an early taste for reading, which continued with but little interruption during the whole course of my life.

After my return to school, my progress in Latin was prevented by the hooping cough; cut off from all occupation and amusement, my time passed heavily, and I should have been in a miserable situation, had I not been treated with the utmost kindness and tenderness by Dr. Lydiat and by his sister, who managed his house. My father soon came from Bath, and took me away with him. I parted from my young friends of the Dewes family

with regret; and I did my best to express my gratitude to Dr. Lydiat and to his sister, Mrs. Gore.

Our journey lay in some places out of the high road, and across corn fields. Our vehicle was a two wheeled carriage, something like a French *chaise de poste*, and as we travelled slowly, I had time for observation. I recollect, however, only one thing that caught my attention: when we came on the high road to Cirencester, I saw a man carrying a machine five or six feet in diameter, of an oval form, and composed of slender ribs of steel. I begged my father to inquire what it was. We were told, that it was the skeleton of a lady's hoop. It was furnished with hinges, which permitted it to fold together in a small compass, so that more than two persons might sit on one seat of a coach, a feat not easily performed when ladies were encompassed with whalebone hoops of six feet extent. My curiosity was excited by the first sight of this machine, probably more than another child's might have been, because previous agreeable associations had given me some taste for mechanics, which was still a little further increased by the pleasure I took in examining this glittering contrivance. Thus even the most trivial incidents in childhood act reciprocally as cause and effect in forming our taste.

What passed from the time when I left Warwick, till my father's return to Ireland, I do not distinctly remember; it therefore passed most probably without any event, that had much effect upon my temper or understanding. I recollect only that my mother's health had declined after her return from Bath.

Every thing that art could suggest was tried for her recovery.

About the year 1754, Lord Trimblestone, a Roman catholic nobleman, who had resided many years abroad, had become famous for his skill in medicine, and for his benevolent attention to persons of all ranks who applied to him. Success increased his popularity. With his permission, my father and mother went to Trimblestone to consult him. They took up their lodgings in the neighbourhood of Trim, near his seat, and were most cordially and hospitably received. My mother's complaints his lordship did not hope to cure; but he ordered such palliation as the art of medicine affords. I remember in particular, that the *uva ursi*, which has been lately resorted to in nephritic complaints, was prescribed for her, and with great difficulty obtained. My mother was pleased with the manners, and appearance, and mode of life at Trimblestone, and when she returned home, though she had received, and had indeed expected, but little advantage from Lord Trimblestone's prescriptions, she often related with pleasure, circumstances that passed while she was at his house. At the time which I speak of, most families in Ireland dined at three or four o'clock, but Lord Trimblestone never dined till seven or eight in the evening. This arrangement gave an air of mystery to his Lordship's domestic economy, which added perhaps to the influence of his real skill over the minds of his patients. My mother was much struck with the beauty and grace of Lady Trimblestone. She had, I believe, passed the meridian of life: but the glare of a profusion of light; the fine brilliant pendants in her ears; the unchanged colour

of her beautiful hair, which fell exuberantly in ringlets upon her neck,—contrary to the fashion of that day, which required that a lady's hair should be powdered and rolled over a cylinder of black silk stuffed with wool, so as to draw the hair almost out by the roots from the forehead;—and above all, an air of ease and dignity which she had acquired in France; made her, at least to the eyes of my mother, a most charming and interesting person. Lord Trimblestone commanded attention from his high character in the world for medical knowledge and for philanthropy. They soon set their stranger guests at ease, and both of them amused their auditors with accounts of remarkable patients, diseases, and cures, which they had witnessed. One in particular I will relate.

A very delicate lady of fashion, who had, till her beauty began to decay, been flattered egregiously by one sex, and vehemently envied by the other, began to feel, as years approached, that she was shrinking into nobody. Disappointment produces ennui, and ennui disease; a train of nervous symptoms succeeded each other with alarming rapidity, and after the advice and the consultations of all the physicians in Ireland, and the correspondence of the most eminent in England, this poor lady had recourse in the last resort to Lord Trimblestone. He declined interfering, he hesitated; but at last, after much intercession, he consented to hear the lady's complaints, and to endeavour to effect her cure: this concession was made upon a positive stipulation, that the patient should remain three weeks in his house, without any attendants but those of his own family, and that her friends should give her up entirely to his management.—The case was desperate, and any terms must be sub-

mitted to, where there was a prospect of relief. The lady went to Trimblestone, was received with the greatest attention and politeness. Instead of a grave and forbidding physician, her host, she found, was a man of most agreeable manners. Lady Trimblestone did every thing in her power to entertain her guest, and for two or three days the demon of ennui was banished. At length the lady's vapours returned; every thing appeared changed. Melancholy brought on a return of alarming nervous complaints—convulsions of the limbs—perversion of the understanding—a horror of society; in short, all the complaints that are to be met with in an advertisement, enumerating the miseries of a nervous patient. In the midst of one of her most violent fits, four mutes, dressed in white, entered her apartment; slowly approaching, they took her without violence in their arms, and without giving her time to recollect herself, conveyed her into a distant chamber hung with black, and lighted with green tapers. From the ceiling, which was of a considerable height, a swing was suspended, in which she was placed by the mutes, so as to be seated at some distance from the ground. One of the mutes set the swing in motion; and as it approached one end of the room, she was opposed by a grim menacing figure armed with a huge rod of birch. When she looked behind her, she saw a similar figure at the other end of the room, armed in the same manner. The terror, notwithstanding the strange circumstances which surrounded her, was not of that sort which threatens life; but every instant there was an immediate hazard of bodily pain. After some time, the mutes appeared again, with great composure took the lady out of the swing, and conducted

her to her apartment. When she had reposed some time, a servant came to inform her, that tea was ready. Fear of what might be the consequences of a refusal prevented her from declining to appear. No notice was taken of what had happened, and the evening and the next day passed without any attack of her disorder. On the third day the vapours returned—the mutes reappeared—the menacing flagellants again affrighted her, and again she enjoyed a remission of her complaints. By degrees the fits of her disorder became less frequent, the ministration of her tormenters less necessary, and in time, the habits of hypochondriacism were so often interrupted, and such a new series of ideas was introduced into her mind, that she recovered perfect health, and preserved to the end of her life sincere gratitude for her adventurous physician.

After my father had consulted Lord Trimblestone, he took me to Drogheda school, of which Doctor Norris was the master, and which was then the best in Ireland. For a few weeks I was there as ridiculous for my English accent, as I had been at Warwick for my Irish brogue. I soon, however, learnt to imitate my companions sufficiently to avoid their ridicule; but I never lost the English pronunciation, to which I was always accustomed at my father's house. When I say that I never lost the English pronunciation, I mean that I never lost it so that I could not readily resume it at pleasure. After I had at any time resided in England for three months, I returned to the English habits of my early years. Travelling in stage coaches, where people attend much to the idiom of their fellow travellers, I never was taken for an Irishman, though, from some organic peculiarity,

I believe, in my articulation, or nonarticulation of the letter *r*, I have frequently been thought to be a native of Cumberland, and sometimes I have been mistaken for a German.

Parents should be very careful about the habits, which their children acquire of pronunciation and idiom; these are scarcely ever to be eradicated in after-life.

The class, in which I was placed at Drogheda school, happened to be composed of the dullest boys under the care of Doctor Norris.—One or two trivial schoolboy anecdotes will be pardoned, as they shew the good humour, and the talents for governing a school, which my excellent master possessed.

We were forbidden to go into a certain street, which was near our play-ground; but this order was as it were by common consent forgotten, or set at nought by most of the boys, upon the following occasion.

An old foreign refugee, a confectioner of the name of Pilioli, had lived in this lane, and was well known to the boys, to whom he used to sell tarts:—he was a merry jesting fellow, and a great favourite with us. Pilioli died suddenly; his funeral was to pass through the forbidden lane, and most of the boys ran out thither to see it.

When we came into school after dinner, Doctor Norris entered with such a frown upon his brow, as quelled the stoutest heart among the culprits. I was not of the number. We stood up to say our lessons; our class was in *Cordery*, and this day's lesson began with "*O Filioli*,"—which, fortunately, the boy who was to begin could not construe. Another and another were equally embarrassed:—at last, when it

came to my turn, and when the Doctor sternly reiterated, "*O Filioli*," I looked at him with propitiatory humility, and in a supplicating tone exclaimed, "*O Pilioli*." The Doctor smiled, and pardoned the delinquents.

After I had once reached the head of my class, I kept my place, and then found, that, after I had said my lessons, I had a great deal of weary time on my hands, while the other boys were getting through theirs. It was forbidden to read any thing but our lessons in school-hours. I grew so much tired of having nothing to do, that I constructed a kind of fortress behind a high reading-desk, in which I for some time enjoyed without detection or animadversion the pleasure of amusing myself with English books. I recollect that the book I was reading was Pope's Iliad, which interested me much, when one day, Doctor Norris espied my head behind the reading desk, and I heard him ask, "What is all that?" The boys answered, "It is only Edgeworth's *Cobby-house*, Sir, as he calls it."

"Edgeworth's *what?*"—There was no jesting with the Doctor upon any infringement of the laws.

"Don't you know, Sir, that it is not permitted to read any English books in school-hours?"

I pleaded, that I had said my lesson a considerable time, and that I had nothing to do.

"Why not get your lesson for to-morrow, Sir?"

"I have it, Sir."

"Well, Sir, for the next day?"

"I have it, Sir.—I have my lessons, Sir, for the whole week."

"Stand up this moment then, and say them,

Sir, under penalty, that if you miss a word you shall be flogged."

I stood up, and said my lessons for a week, without missing a word. Doctor Norris gave a nod of benevolent approbation, and decreed, that I should thenceforward have permission to read in school-hours, in my *Cobby-house*, whatever English books I chose.

I have all my life felt gratitude to Dr. Norris for the judicious kindness with which he treated me during the whole time I was at his school: he encouraged me by his approbation, and thus softened the hardship of drudging on with class-fellows, who happened to be dunces. I must except two of my school-fellows, who were remarkably clever boys, and good scholars, the two sons of Chief Baron Foster; John, the eldest, who became afterwards the justly celebrated Speaker of the Irish House of Commons; and William, who became successively Bishop of Kilmore, and Bishop of Clogher. The friendship formed with them at school has lasted through our lives.

Much more than by my scholarship I was distinguished among my companions by my activity in jumping, vaulting, and in every kind of bodily exercise. During vacations from Drogheda school, I was invited to Collon, by Chief Baron Foster, with whose sons I hunted desperately. The eldest, Mr. John Foster, was the best rider that I have ever known. Upon a little horse, that had, I believe from his former possessor, acquired the cognomen of *Beggarman*, I contrived to keep close to the heels of Foster's excellent hunter, often to the admiration of a numerous company of sportsmen.

My father was not fond of hounds or of hunting, so that I had no opportunity of pursuing this royal amusement when at home: I therefore followed shooting, and became so gloriously expert, that I was able to kill eighty per cent. at snipe shooting.

When I was about fourteen years old, upon some trifling occasion, I thought myself ill treated at Drogheda, and I prevailed upon my father to remove me to a school in his neighbourhood, at Longford. The name of my new master was Hynes. He was a man of mild manners, a good scholar, and well acquainted with English literature. He attended to me carefully, and I applied with diligence, so that in the course of less than two years I was prepared to enter the University of Dublin.

But, before I went to the University, my attention was suddenly turned from my studies by my eldest sister's marriage. She married Francis Fox, Esq., of Fox Hall, in the county of Longford, a gentleman of good family and good fortune, whose estate being within a few miles of Edgeworth-Town, the families had frequent intercourse. Balls, carousings, and festivities of all kinds, followed my sister's marriage. In these I joined with transports of delight, beyond even what might have been expected from a boy of my great vivacity of temper, and personal activity. Every morning I was following the hounds with my new brother-in-law, and the foremost in every desperate exploit of the chase. Every night I was the most incessant, unwearied dancer at the ball. How human nature, even the nature of a schoolboy, went through all that I did at this time, I know not. For three nights successively I was never in bed: nor was I content with all the huntings and dancings

which I have described; but at every interval, when others allowed themselves some repose, or acknowledged themselves exhausted by fatigue, I was still working off my superabundant spirit of animation, and amazing my companions by some extraordinary display of activity. Of several of these I have in my later years been reminded by some of my surviving contemporaries, who have assured me, that they were eye-witnesses of feats of boyish agility, which I have not only totally forgotten, but can now scarcely believe.

Other circumstances, which happened about the same time, are more clear in my recollection. My favourite partner among the young ladies at these wedding dances was the daughter of the curate from whom I learned my Accidence.

One night after the dancing had ceased, the young people retired to what was then called a *raking pot of tea*. A description of this Hibernian amusement I have given in another place. It is here sufficient to say, that it is a potation of strong tea, taken at an early hour in the morning, to refresh the spirits of those who have sat up all night. We were all very young and gay, and it was proposed by one of my companions, who had put a white cloak round his shoulders to represent a surplice, that he should marry me to the lady with whom I had danced.

The key of the door served for a ring, and a few words of the ceremony, with much laughter and playfulness, were gabbled over. My father heard of this mock-marriage, and it excited great alarm in his mind. He was induced by his paternal fears to treat the matter too seriously, and he instigated a suit of *jactitation of marriage* in the ecclesiastical court, to

annul these imaginary nuptials. The truth was apparent to every body who knew us. No suspicion even was entertained of the young lady's having any design on my heart, or of my having obtained any influence in hers. All the publicity that was given to this childish affair was fortunately of no disadvantage to her, and she was afterwards suitably married in her own neighbourhood.

About this period, much of my spare time was spent at Pakenham Hall, the seat of Lord Longford, the grandfather of the present Earl. He was my father's nephew, and a man of superior abilities and politeness. His lady had also considerable talents, wit, humour, and a taste for literature, uncommon for women in her day. She saw into my character, or rather, she saw what it might be made. Field sports then appeared to be my ruling passion: instead of thwarting my love for them, she let me shoot till I was tired; but she gave me the key of the library, where, as she expected, I soon passed whole days devouring its contents. This and other concurring circumstances extinguished my passion for field sports before I was eighteen. It never afterwards revived.

At a great entertainment which was given at Pakenham Hall, when I was about fourteen, besides music and dancing, there was held a Faro bank, at which the principal gentry played with much eagerness at no very low rate. Lord Longford called me aside, and, putting five guineas into my hand, desired me to try my fortune. In the course of the evening I won, what appeared to me, a large sum, nearly a hundred guineas. The next evening he asked, whether I would again risk my winning; I readily complied, and when I was reduced to a single guinea,

he offered to lend me whatever I wanted; but I declined this offer, rose from the table, and continued to look on during the rest of the evening. The next day Lord Longford told me, that he had induced me to play, to obtain an insight into my character. "I observed," said he, "that you were never too eager, or too indifferent; that you were not elated when you won, and that you kept your temper when a rapid run of ill-luck reduced you to poverty; I therefore congratulate you upon your being in all probability exempt from the vice of gaming."

Whether the prophecy, as it frequently happens, became the cause of its own accomplishment, I cannot determine; but it is certain, that in my subsequent life I never felt an inclination for cards, dice, or lotteries, even when the stake was inconsiderable. By this turn of mind I saved a great deal of time, that is commonly thrown away in weak compliance with the habits of others; nor did I give offence to those of my companions who liked play, because they could easily supply my place from the swarm of idlers, who crowd every fashionable assembly.

Immediately after my farcical marriage, and more farcical divorce, I entered Trinity College, Dublin, 26th April, 1761. My tutor was the Rev. Patrick Palmer, a gentlemanlike and worthy man; but it was not the fashion in those days to plague fellow-commoners with lectures. My class-fellows, except William Foster my competitor, gave me so little motive for emulation, that I did not trouble myself much with study. In competition with him I was obliged to exert myself strenuously. After a hard fought examination, he obtained from me the premium, which he generously acknowledged to be my

right. At the next public examination, I was audaciously and shamefully careless, I went into the hall to translate six books of Homer, of the greatest part of which I had never read one word. A stupid young man succeeded against me, though I certainly answered better than he did; but the examiner, the celebrated Dr. Duigenan, suspecting from my manner, that I had not taken much previous pains, plainly asked me, how often I had read these books of Homer. I told him "never." "Then Sir," said he, "though you have answered better than your antagonist, I will not give you the premium, which is intended as a reward for diligence, and not as an encouragement for idleness and presumption."

I wish to pass over my residence at Dublin College. I was not seventeen. I was supposed to have some talents, which, among my associates, was a sufficient apology for my total neglect of study; and I passed my time in dissipation of every kind. It was, however, but for six months, the only time in my life that I ever spent in such a disgraceful manner. Young as I was, I became thoroughly disgusted. I was sensible of the dangers which I had incurred, and capable of rejoicing at my escape. The vigour of my constitution endured the want of rest and sleep, and the strength of my head enabled me to resist the effects of those copious potations, which were in fashion among my companions. My want of taste for the joys of intoxication prevented me from continuing the habit, when it was no longer the fashion; so that I have passed some time at two universities, and have been concerned in conducting four or five contested elections, without ever having been intoxicated in my life.

CHAPTER IV.

[1761.

My father prudently removed me from Dublin to Oxford. I entered Corpus Christi as gentleman-commoner on the 10th of October 1761. My father preferred Oxford to Cambridge, because he had an old friend who resided near Oxford; a gentleman who had been bred for the bar, had been with him at the Temple, and upon whose assistance he could depend in the conduct of my studies. This friend was Mr. Elers. To my father's letter, asking his permission to introduce me to his house, Mr. Elers replied, that he should be very glad to be of any service to the son of his old friend; but that, considering the disposition of which I had been described, he thought it right to represent, that he had "several daughters grown and growing up, who, as the world said, were pretty girls; but to whom he could not give fortunes, that could make them suitable matches for Mr. Edgeworth's son."

This letter did not deter my father from his purpose, but probably decided him to put me under the care of such a discreet and honourable friend. My mother was going to Bath at this time for her health, and as soon as he had settled her and his family there, he took me with him to Black Bourton, within fourteen miles of Oxford. Black Bourton, anciently one of the seats of the Hungerford family,

had by marriage become the property of my father's friend, Mr. Elers, whose residence it was at this time. As the Elers family became afterwards nearly connected with me, I think it necessary to my history, to give some account of theirs; particularly as there is something uncommon in the rise and fall of their fortunes.

Paul Elers, Esq., was descended from a German family of some opulence. How or why the family of Elerses came into England I know not: but I know, that some of them were favourites of the Elector of Mentz, of whom they had several pictures; I remember one in particular, that had been dismantled of some diamonds, which, from their setting, were probably of great value. The family, declining in England, went over to Ireland, where they engaged in business, and were so successful as to breed up their daughters handsomely, and to maintain their son at the Temple. This son, Paul Elers, was my father's friend. Mr. Elers had applied with such diligence to his studies, that he soon came into reputable business at the English bar. While at the Temple, he not only formed a friendship with my father, but with several other gentlemen of good conduct and creditable connexions. Among others he was intimate with Mr. Grosvenor, a man of high birth and impaired fortunes. Mr. Grosvenor had played deeply, but it was in the *best* company; and in this society he was singled out by Mr. Hungerford, who had an only daughter reputed to be heiress to a great estate. Mr. Hungerford was pleased with Mr. Grosvenor's manners, and expressed a wish, that he should become his son-in-law, at the same time honourably telling him, that there were some

difficulties in making out a title to the estate. A lawyer of abilities, and fit to be trusted with family secrets, was consequently to be employed, to look over the family papers, and to draw such deeds and settlements as were necessary. Paul Elers was a man of much legal ability and knowledge, of a sober temper, and of a character to be relied on. To him Mr. Grosvenor applied, and partly from friendship, and partly from the prospect of a handsome remuneration, he prevailed on Mr. Elers to accompany him to Black Bourton. Here Mr. Elers found a family anxious to know the real situation of their affairs, and to dispose of an only daughter, who had never seen the gentleman whom her friends had chosen for her husband. Some legal formalities were necessary to secure the estate to Mr. Grosvenor, who was to possess the whole of it, as the fortune of Miss Hungerford. This lady had not much beauty, grace, or dignity ; she was a plump, good natured, unfashioned girl, with little knowledge of any sort, and with no accomplishments. Mr. Grosvenor was not smitten with his intended bride. A fortnight wore away in turning over parchments, making out rent rolls, and preparing the terrestrial possessions to be had and held along with his angel. Mr. Grosvenor grew melancholy, and one fair morning expressed his disatisfaction to Mr. Elers. " The girl is a sad incumbrance on the estate," said he. His friend was of a different opinion, and spoke of Miss Hungerford in terms that astonished Mr. Grosvenor. " A thought," said Grosvenor, " has just struck me; suppose you were to take the whole bargain off my hands ?" " Most willingly," replied Elers, " if it were possible ; but I fear that neither Mr. Hungerford nor his lady would

ever hear of such a proposal." Mr. Grosvenor saw no impossibility. He openly and honourably told his mind to the father and mother. The father liked Mr. Elers, the mother was not so well disposed towards him, but yielded to her husband's arguments; while the young lady, like Virgil's Lavinia, submitted with blushes, and with becoming filial duty, to the wishes of her parents. Mr. Grosvenor returned with a light heart to London, delighted at his escape; and at having made the fortune of his friend, for such was in all appearance the case. Young Elers had nothing but his profession. He married the heiress, and by his legal skill he was safely secured in the possession of her fortune, an estate of eight hundred pounds a year, highly improveable, well wooded, and within a ring fence. To a young man without fortune or connexion, such a match as this promised the means of living in ease if not in affluence; for such an estate, seventy or eighty years ago, was equal to two thousand a year in these days.

But Mr. Elers, by his marriage and new connexions, was at once taken out of the line of life for which he had been educated, and to which he was suited by his talents and early habits. By his application and good conduct, both as a man and as a lawyer, he was coming fast into business, and he had before his marriage a fair prospect of rising to the foremost ranks of his profession. He now became a country gentleman, without connexions, except those of his wife, and without name or influence. He gave up his profession to please his father-in-law, to whom he felt gratitude that did him honor; but besides he had considerable expectancies from Mr. Hungerford, and was bound

to him by prudence as well as gratitude. That industry which had carried Mr. Elers through the irksome study of his profession, entirely failed him in his new situation. He knew nothing of country business; he had no taste for field sports, or for the conversation of the neighbouring squires. He had not acquired the habit of committing his thoughts to writing, which prevented him from making any practical use as an author of the stores which he had laid up in his capacious memory. In short he had no object in view, to excite his ambition. Having no interest in the common routine of a country life, he had little to do, and that little he neglected. The family into which he married was proud, and when an heir to the family was born, no expense was spared to celebrate the important event; and as Mrs. Elers had in perfection one essential quality of a wife, before her husband could look about him, she had celebrated two or three such festivals. The lady, had she been ever so well versed in family economy, could not, during such an incessant production of children, have been of much service in managing the family. Beside the servants necessary in a gentleman's family, there were four or five nurses to be maintained, humored, and kept from breaking the peace. Now Mrs. Elers did not possess any one talent necessary for governing a family, except good humour; and this quality in her arose in some degree from weakness, and from hatred of trouble. A very old steward of the Hungerford family managed all the business of the estate; a great part of which business consisted in choosing, felling, and cutting up wood for fuel. This poor little man, eighty years of age, used to

be seen in the depth of winter, upon a little grey horse with shaggy hair and a long flaxen mane and tail, riding about the grounds, and seeming to conduct a number of labourers, who did precisely what they pleased. The value of the timber cut down for firing was more than equal to the price of coals sufficient for the house, and the expense of making it up for use was still greater. Every part of the domestic expenditure was carried on in this manner, so that in a few years after the death of his father-in-law, Mr. Elers found himself in distress, without having been guilty of the slightest extravagance. About twelve years after his marriage, he made an effort to increase his income by chamber-practice, as a lawyer in the country. In a short time business poured in upon him beyond his most sanguine expectations; and he had again a fair prospect of acquiring some provision for his family. At this time the famous Oxford election took place, and Mr. Elers was looked to by the Marlborough interest, as a proper person to conduct the legal proceedings on that memorable occasion. Mr. Charles Jenkinson was at the same time employed by the same party, and they were considered as candidates of equal pretensions in point of abilities for the favor of those whom they supported. What Mr. Jenkinson's connexions in that country might be, I know not; but Mr. Elers lived among people, who happened to be opposed to the interest which he now supported. His legal acuteness, and to speak impartially, his readiness to go all lengths, made him extremely obnoxious to those, who had been formerly his best friends and most lucrative clients. How far his com-

plaisance led him I could never distinctly ascertain; but I have heard from both parties that he was a *useful* and a zealous partizan. After the contest was over, Mr. Elers returned home; and as he was too indolent to pay continual court at Blenheim, or at the houses of his other great friends, he soon lost the interest, which he had made among them. Mr. Jenkinson, on the contrary, never quitted the hold which he had gained, and having constant intercourse with men in power, and being a person of family and address, he advanced steadily in the career of ambition to the height of ministerial eminence.

From the time of the Oxford election, the efforts that Mr. Elers made to advance himself consisted in desultory visits to the houses of the great, and in writing political letters. His letters, though sagacious and pertinent, yet, from his living at a distance from the capital, generally came too late to be of any service. His business as a lawyer forsook him, he had become unpopular, his family rapidly increased, the old steward doated, Mr. Elers left every thing to his wife, and Mrs. Elers left every thing to her servants. Things were in this situation at Black-Bourton, when I was introduced to the family by my father. He had personally known little of Mr. Elers, since their first friendship was formed at the Temple; but judging from his letters, my father considered him as the same man of active mind and talents, and with the same habits of business, which he had then appeared to possess. It was, therefore, naturally a great object with him, to place me on my first going to Oxford under the care of a person whom he so much esteemed, and of whose abilities he had such a

high opinion. The family at Black-Bourton at this time consisted of Mrs. Elers, her mother Mrs. Hungerford, and four grown up young ladies, besides several children. The eldest son, an officer, was absent. The young ladies, though far from being beauties, were handsome; and though destitute of accomplishments, they were notwithstanding agreeable, from an air of youth and simplicity, and from unaffected good nature and gaiety. The person who struck me most at my introduction to this family group was Mrs. Hungerford. She was near eighty, tall and majestic, with eyes that still retained uncommon lustre. She was not able to rise from her chair without the assistance of one of her granddaughters; but when she had risen, and stood leaning on her tortoise-shell cane, she received my father, as the friend of the family, with so much politeness, and with so much grace, as to eclipse all the young people by whom she was surrounded. Mrs. Hungerford was a Blake, connected with the Norfolk family. She had formerly been the wife of Sir Alexander Kennedy, whom Mr. Hungerford killed in a duel in Blenheim Park. Why she dropped her title in marrying Mr. Hungerford I know not, nor can I tell how he persuaded the beautiful widow to marry him after he had killed her husband. Mr. Hungerford brought her into the retirement of Black-Bourton, the ancient seat of his family, an excellent but antiquated house, with casement windows, divided by stone frame-work, the principal rooms wainscoted with oak, of which the antiquity might be guessed from the varnish it had acquired from time. In the large hall were hung spears, and hunting tackle, and armour, and trophies of war and of the chase, and a portrait, not of

exquisite painting, of the gallant Sir Edward Hungerford. This portrait had been removed hither from Farley Castle, the principal seat of the family. In the history of Mrs. Hungerford there was something mysterious, which was not, as I perceived, known to the younger part of the family. I made no enquiries from Mr. Elers, but I observed, that she was for a certain time in the day invisible. She had an apartment to herself above stairs, containing three or four rooms; when she was below stairs, we used to make a short way from one side of the house to the other, through her rooms, which occupied nearly one side of a quadrangle, of which the house consisted. One day, forgetting that she was in her room, and her door by accident not having been locked, I suddenly entered: I saw her kneeling before a crucifix, which was placed upon her toilette; her beautiful eyes streaming with tears, and cast up to Heaven with the most fervent devotion; her silver locks flowing down her shoulders; the remains of exquisite beauty, grace, and dignity, in her whole figure. I had not, till I saw her at these her private devotions, known that she was a catholic; nor had I, till I saw her tears of contrition, any reason to suppose that she thought herself a penitent. The scene struck me, young as I was, and more gay than young—her tears seemed to comfort, not to depress her—and for the first time since my childhood I was convinced, that the consolations of religion are fully equal to its terrors. She was so much in earnest, that she did not perceive me; and I fortunately had time to withdraw without having disturbed her devotions.

But to pursue my own history: I received an unlimited invitation to Black-Bourton, and soon became

one of the family. I laughed, and talked, and sang with the ladies, and read Cicero and Longinus with their father, who, notwithstanding my youth, and my propensity to female society, filled many of my hours with agreeable conversation. Having entered Corpus Christi College, Oxford, I applied assiduously not only to my studies, under my excellent tutor Mr. Russell*, but also to the perusal of the best English writers, both in prose and verse. Scarcely a day passed without my having added to my stock of knowledge some new fact or idea; and I remember with satisfaction, the pleasure I then felt, from the consciousness of intellectual improvement.

I had the good fortune to make acquaintance with the young men, the most distinguished at Corpus Christi for application, abilities, and good conduct. When I mention Sir James M'Donald†, and those with whom he lived, as my companions, I need add nothing more.

My acquaintance with Sir James commenced at the fencing school of Paniotti, a native of one of the Greek islands, a fine old Grecian, full of sentiments of honour and courage, and of a most independent spirit.

Mr. L., a young gentleman of a noble family and of abilities, but of overbearing manners, was our fellow pupil under Paniotti. At the same school we met a young man of small fortune, and in a subordinate situation at Maudlin. He fenced in a regular way, and much better than Mr. L., who, in revenge,

* Father of the gentleman who is now at the head of the Charter House.

† See Lettres de Madame du Deffand, and Tweddell's Remains.

would sometimes take a stiff foil that our master used for parrying, and pretending to fence, would thrust it with great violence against his antagonist. The young man submitted for some time to this foul play, but at last he appealed to Paniotti, and to such of his pupils as were present. Paniotti, though he had expectancies from the patronage of the father of his nobly born pupil, yet without hesitation condemned his conduct.

One day, in defiance of L.'s bullying pride, I proposed to fence with him, armed as he was with this unbending foil, on condition that he should not thrust at my face; but at the very first opportunity he drove the foil into my mouth. I went to the door, broke off the buttons of two foils, turned the key in the lock, and offered one of these extemporaneous swords to my antagonist, who very prudently declined the invitation.

This person afterwards shewed through life an unprincipled and cowardly disposition. The young man, who had at first borne with him with so much temper, distinguished himself in afterlife in the army. I mention the circumstance in which I was concerned, because I believe it contributed to my being well received at first among my fellow students at Oxford. I remember with gratitude, that I was liked by them, and I recollect with pleasure the delightful and profitable hours I passed at that University during three years of my life.

Doctor Randolph was at that time president of Corpus Christi College. With great learning and many excellent qualities, he had some singularities, which produced nothing more injurious from his friends than a smile. He had the habit of muttering

upon the most trivial occasions, "*Mors omnibus communis.*" One day his horse stumbled upon Maudlin bridge, and the resigned president let his bridle go, and drawing up the waistband of his breeches as he sat bolt upright, he exclaimed before a crowded audience, "*Mors omnibus communis!*" The same simplicity of character appeared in various instances, and it was mixed with a mildness of temper, that made him generally beloved by the young students. The worthy Doctor was indulgent to us all, but to me in particular upon one occasion, where I fear that I tried his temper more than I ought to have done. The gentlemen-commoners were not obliged to attend early chapel on any days but Sunday and Thursday; I had been too frequently absent, and the president was determined to rebuke me before my companions. "Sir," said he to me as we came out of chapel one Sunday, "You *never* attend Thursday prayers." "I do *sometimes*, Sir," I replied. "I did not see you here last Thursday. And, Sir," cried the president, rising into anger, "I will have nobody in my college," (ejaculating a certain customary guttural noise, something between a cough and the sound of a postman's horn,) "Sir, I will have nobody in my college that does not attend chapel. I did not see you at chapel last Thursday." "Mr. President," said I, with a most profound reverence, "it was impossible that you should see me, for you were not there yourself."

Instead of being more exasperated by my answer, the anger of the good old man fell immediately. He recollected and instantly acknowledged, that he had not been in chapel on that day. It was the only Thursday on which he had been absent for three

years. Turning to me with great suavity, he invited me to drink tea that evening with him and his daughter. This indulgent president's good humor made more salutary impression on the young men he governed, than has been ever effected by the morose manners of any unrelenting disciplinarian.

During the assizes at Oxford, the gownsmen are or were permitted to seat themselves in the courts. In most country courts there is a considerable share of noise and confusion; but at Oxford the din and interruption were beyond any thing I have ever witnessed; the young men were not in the least solicitous to preserve decorum, and the judges were unwilling to be severe upon the students. A man was tried for some felony, the judge had charged the jury, and called on the foreman, who seemed to be a decent farmer, for a verdict. While the judge turned his head aside to speak to somebody, the foreman of the jury, who had not heard the evidence or the judge's charge, asked me, who was behind him, and whom he had observed to be attentive to the trial, what verdict he should give. Struck with the injustice and illegality of this procedure, I stood up and addressed the judges Wills and Smith. "My Lords," said I.—"Sit down, Sir," said the judge. —"My Lord, I request to be heard for one moment."—The judge grew angry.—"Sir, your gown shall not protect you, I must punish you if you persist."—By this time the eyes of the whole court were turned upon me; but feeling that I was in the right I persevered. "My Lord, I must lay a circumstance before you which has just happened." The judge still imagining that I had some complaint to make relative to myself, ordered the

sheriff to remove me.—"My Lord, you will commit me if you think proper, but in the mean time I must declare, that the foreman of this jury is going to deliver an illegal verdict, for he has not heard the evidence, and he has asked me what verdict he ought to give."

The judge from the bench made me an apology for his hastiness, and added a few words of strong approbation. This was of use to me, by tending to increase my self-possession in public, and my desire to take an active part in favour of justice.

During vacations, I went to Bath. There I was in imminent danger of being made a coxcomb, by the notice that was taken of me for my dancing. Fortunately, my success in that important art was so complete, as to wear out, before I was twenty, all ambition or vanity upon the subject. I was so much praised for this trifling accomplishment, so much invited as a good dancer, and taken so little notice of for any thing else, that, disgusted and ashamed of myself, I soon began to avoid exhibiting my saltatory talents, and I seldom danced except when it was necessary to make up a set, or to gain an opportunity of conversing with some lady who was agreeable to me.

Bath was at this time filled with the best company. I had now an opportunity of seeing something of what is called *the world*, and of making some observations on characters and manners.

I remember that I was particularly struck with the appearance of the then Duke of Devonshire. He had retired from the court in disgust, and the chagrin visible in his countenance made me early perceive, that the smiles or frowns of princes have more power

over the happiness of some human beings, than those who are at a distance from sovereigns can conceive. I saw at the same time ambition on a smaller scale gratified, yet exposed to a certain degree of ridicule; I saw Beau Nash, the subject of a well known epigram, the popular monarch of Bath, whose willing subjects paid him the most implicit and cheerful obedience. Nearly at the same time I saw the wit, who had reigned despotically for above half a century over the world of fashion. I saw the remains of the celebrated Lord Chesterfield. I looked in vain for that fire, which we expect to see in the eye of a man of wit and genius. He was obviously unhappy, and a melancholy spectacle. The wise and good Lord Littleton was at Bath during this season. Lord Huntingdon, who was just returned from his Spanish embassy, also came there to meet, as it was supposed, the Duke de Nivernois, who made his appearance for a few days in the rooms. The Duc de Nivernois' very small hat, with a most splendid diamond button, attracted the beaus and belles more than his Excellency's person, which was low, slight, and not remarkable for beauty. Among other witticisms of the day, it was said, that the size of his hat was diminished by the loss of the Canada fur trade — a loss to the French, which occurred about this period.

Among all these men of rank and celebrity, Quin, the actor, was not the personage least distinguished in the pump room at Bath; and at the tavern, "*the Three Tuns*," he was "without a rival and without a judge." Another gentleman, famous in another species of epicurism, made no inconsiderable figure among the fair sex; — Mr. Medlicott, of gallant memory. He was my first cousin, and of course I was acquainted

with him. My father, notwithstanding he was a grave man, and of strict morality and piety, felt some fondness for his profligate nephew; but he had the prudence to put me on my guard against the danger of his society. In fact, the dissolute conduct, and more dissolute conversation of my cousin, served rather to disgust than to allure me. Upon the whole this season at Bath was of use to me, both as to morals and manners. It formed my manners by familiarizing me with the best that were then in fashion; and it wore away in good company that bashfulness, which is frequently converted, by living in other society, into determined awkwardness or impudence. My father, believing that it would be necessary for my happiness to marry early, prudently introduced me during this season at Bath to families, where there were daughters such as he thought would be suitable matches for me. I became acquainted with several agreeable young ladies, with whom as their partner in the ball-room I had opportunities of of conversing. I soon perceived, that those who made the best figure in a ball-room were not always qualified to please in conversation; I saw, that beauty and grace were sometimes accompanied by a frivolous character, by disgusting envy, or despicable vanity. All this I had read of in poetry and prose; but there is a wide difference, especially among young people, between what is read or related, and what is actually seen. Books and advice make much more impression in proportion as we grow older. We find by degrees, that those who lived before us have recorded as the result of their experience the very things that we observe to be true. We do not, therefore, continue as we advance in life, to wait for the conviction of

our own individual experience; but we endeavour to profit by the example and remarks of others. My observations, however, on female manners and character, and my good father's prudence, did not act time enough to prevent my precipitation.

Before I went to Bath, one of the young ladies at Black-Bourton had attracted my attention; I had paid my court to her, and I felt myself insensibly entangled so completely, that I could not find any honourable means of extrication. I have not to reproach myself with any deceit, or suppression of the truth. On my return to Black-Bourton, I did not conceal the altered state of my mind, but having engaged the affections of the young lady, I married while I was yet a youth at college. I resolved to meet the disagreeable consequences of such a step with fortitude, and without being dispirited by the loss of the society to which I had been accustomed. I determined to submit to the displeasure of my father with respectful firmness. My mother, though her hopes of me had always been higher than those of my father, yet softened his anger, by suppressing her own feelings of disappointment; and my kind sister, who was a favourite with my father, used all her influence in my favour. By her tears and supplications she obtained his forgiveness. As I was under age I had married in Scotland; but a few months afterwards, my father had me re-married by licence with his consent. I had a son before I was twenty; and I soon afterwards took my wife to Edgeworth-Town, to pass a year with my father and mother. Alas! that excellent mother lived only a few days after our arrival. She saw my wife, but could form no judgment of her character. My mother, therefore,

exerted herself no more than just to shew her kindness.

On the morning of the day on which my mother died, she called me to her bedside, and told me with a sort of pleasure, that she felt she should die before night. She expressed the following sentiment—"If there is a state of just retribution in another world I must be happy, for I have suffered during the greatest part of my life, and I know that I did not deserve it by my thoughts or actions."

She then communicated to me with great tenderness such remarks upon my character, as she had formed by long and attentive observation. It was then she said to me those words, which I have recorded* as the advice of an excellent and wise mother, given with her dying breath.—"My son, learn how to say NO."—She warned me further of an error, into which from the vivacity of my temper I was most likely to fall—"Your inventive faculty," said she, "will lead you eagerly into new plans; and you may be dazzled by some new scheme, before you have finished, or fairly tried what you have begun.—Resolve to finish, never procrastinate."

These were the last connected sentences that she uttered. The advice made a due and lasting impression upon my mind: after a long life, I cannot now look back upon any part of my conduct, in which I neglected this salutary monition. It is a favourite opinion of many, and it was in particular a favourite opinion of my friend Mr. Day, that people never profit by advice; my experience has taught me to believe otherwise. I have frequently profited by the

* Preface to Vivian.

counsel of my friends, and have frequently known, that others have profited by that which I have had opportunities of giving.

I must be permitted to say a few words more of a mother, to whom I owe so much.

I believe I have mentioned, that, a few hours after my birth, she by some mismanagement lost the use of one arm, and almost of her left side. She was afterwards afflicted with the stone, so that she lived in a continual state of bodily pain; and in a word, her health was most deplorable. Yet under all these afflictions she was cheerful, and had the full use of her excellent understanding. Literature was not the fashion of the times when she was young. My grandmother, as I have been informed, was singularly averse to all learning in a lady, beyond reading the Bible, and being able to cast up a week's household account. By what accident my mother acquired an early and a decided taste for knowledge of all sorts, I never heard; but her application and perseverance were probably stimulated by the preventive measures, that my grandmother took to hinder her from *wasting time* upon books. My mother told me, that she frequently excused herself from going to public places and private parties, that she might obtain an opportunity of reading some favorite author. Partly from good sense in her choice, and partly from her good fortune in meeting with their works, the best authors were her favorites. And at time when Stella and Mrs. Delany were looked up to as persons of a different class from the ladies, who were commonly to be met with in the best circles in Ireland, my mother had stored her mind with more literature, than she ever allowed to appear in common conver-

sation. The fruits of this early application amply repaid her for the pains which she had taken to cultivate her mind. When she was incapacitated by disease from any other enjoyment, she was enabled to lull the sense of pain by the charms of literature, and by the course of her own thoughts. I remember, though I was but a child when I heard them, various conversations between her and my father upon points of history, and about opinions upon religious subjects, in which it appeared to me, that my mother generally had the advantage: this I collected sometimes from comparing such of their arguments as I could in some measure comprehend; and at other times, when third persons competent to decide were present, I perceived that they usually inclined to the side which my mother adopted. Beside fortitude under real sufferings, exemplary piety, an excellent understanding, and much decision of character, she had the most generous disposition that I ever met with; not only that common generosity, which parts with money, or money's worth, freely, and almost without the right hand knowing what the left hand doth; but she had also an entire absence of selfish consideration. Her own wishes or opinions were never pursued merely because they were her own; the ease and comfort of every body about her were necessary for her well-being. Every distress, as far as her fortune, or her knowledge, or her wit or eloquence could reach, was alleviated or removed; and, above all, she could forgive, and sometimes even forget injuries. In her own family, domestic order, decent economy, and plenty were combined; and to the education of her children her whole mind was bent from every ordinary

occupation. She had read every thing that had been written on the subject of education, and preferred with sound judgment the opinions of Locke. To these, with modifications suggested by her own good sense, she steadily adhered; and to the influence of her instructions and authority I owe the happiness of my life.

CHAPTER V.

As it was necessary that I should levy a fine of a small estate, that had been left to me by an uncle, my father kept me in Ireland for a year after my marriage. During that time I read some law, and more science. To amuse myself, I made, with indifferent tools, and with the assistance of an indifferent turner, a wooden orrery, that represented the motions of the sun, moon, and earth. I was then destitute of books to assist me, but I calculated the wheel-work accurately, and invented a movement, to represent the obliquity of the moon's orbit, and its change, which I afterwards found to be the same as what is usually employed in this sort of machinery. I never passed twelve months with less pleasure or improvement: no person of my family had any taste for the scientific employments in which I was occupied, and my young wife in particular had but little sympathy with my tastes. I felt the inconvenience of an early and hasty marriage; and though I heartily repented my folly, I determined to bear with firmness and temper the evil, which I had brought upon myself. Perhaps pride had some share in my resolution.

In the autumn of 1765 I returned to England, and stopped for a few days at Chester, where my wife's aunt resided. By accident I was invited to see the

Microcosm, a mechanical exhibition, which was then frequented by every body at Chester. Beside some frivolous moving pictures, the machine represented various motions of the heavenly bodies with neatness and precision. The movements of the figures, both of men and animals, in the pictures, were highly ingenious. I returned so frequently to examine them, that the person who shewed the exhibition was induced to let me see the internal structure of the whole machinery. In the course of conversation, he mentioned the names of some ingenious gentlemen, whom he had met with at different places where he had exhibited, and among the rest he spoke of Dr. Darwin, whom he had met at Lichfield. He described to me a carriage, which the Doctor had invented. It was so constructed as to turn in a small compass, without danger of oversetting, and without the incumbrance of a crane-necked perch. I determined to try my skill in coach-making, and to endeavour to obtain similar advantages in a carriage of my own construction. As I had no particular object to engage my attention, I had great pleasure in looking forward to this scheme, as a source of employment and amusement. Had I been present at this time of my life in the House of Commons during an animated debate, the subject of which had been level to my capacity, and to the actual state of my knowledge, it is more than probable, that I should have turned my thoughts and my ambition to parliamentary instead of to scientific pursuits.

One evening, whilst I was at Chester, as I was walking with my wife on the walls, I saw at a distance an officer, with whom I had been formerly acquainted when at college in Dublin. I knew him

to be one of those dangerous people, who, when they are drunk, "*run a muck*" at all they meet, without distinguishing friend or foe. I perceived that he was intoxicated, and I observed that he lifted up the bonnet of every lady he met, to examine her face. To avoid the quarrel, which must have necessarily ensued if he had taken this liberty with my wife, and finding that I was too near him to retreat, I instantly led her up to him, and introduced her as the bride of his old friend. This not only averted the disagreeable consequences, which would have probably ensued had we met in another manner, but it also prevented him from insulting any body else whilst we continued together. The most unoffending persons are liable sometimes to the dangers of affronts from the folly and intemperance of others; and it is much wiser to run the risk of offending such persons, by fairly meeting them, than to wait for the attack of their capricious humour. I lately (in 1807) happened to see this gentleman again, and adverted to the circumstance. Age had subdued the petulance of his character, but had not effaced the remembrance of his youthful follies. He acknowledged, that my prudence had made a strong and salutary impression upon him at the time, and had probably been of use to him in preventing similar eccentric sallies.

From Chester, I went to Black-Bourton, where I found the family in great distress. Mr. Elers was by the malice of an enemy confined for debt. The decline of the fortunes of this family was not occasioned by any extravagance, but brought on by that indolence of character in the head of the house, which I had remarked in my first acquaintance with him. This was afterwards much increased, and added

to it was the habit of castle-building. He was continually forming projects of future aggrandizement, upon the civil hopes which were given to him by letters from courtiers; hopes, which he magnified into positive promises. In reward for his services at the famous Oxford Election, nothing was done for him, except that an ensign's commission was presented to his eldest son. Yet, though experience did not justify his hopes from the great, still he hoped on from day to day. I have seen him sit hour after hour in his arm-chair by the fireside, picking cinders from the hearth, and throwing them into the grate: or with his elbows on his knees he would hang over the embers of a wood fire, and from time to time, as any bright idea struck him, he would utter a short cough or ejaculation, sounding like *Hein! Heing!* A sign of secret self-satisfaction in the schemes he was planning.

But while day after day, and year after year, he went on in this manner, building splendid castles in the air, his ancient and magnificent habitation was falling piecemeal to ruins, and his children, for want of ordinary instruction, were growing up in absolute ignorance. Some of the children learned to write from an itinerant writing master, who fortunately was pleased with the simplicity and goodness of his pupils, so that he had taken pains sufficient to teach them to write and spell tolerably well, and to add pounds, shillings, and pence with facility; beyond this they had learned nothing. Of the meaning of many common words in their own language they had no discriminating notion, farther than that such an adjective meant to express good or bad, approbation or disapprobation. Yet, while he thus neglected his

own children, Mr. Elers was assiduous in assisting my studies, not only by conversation and advice, but by laborious extracts from books. During his confinement I used frequently to visit him, and to endeavour by my conversation and attentions, to soften the rigour of his situation. I seldom returned without several sheets of extracts, which between the intervals of my visits he had made for my instruction from the books he was reading. These extracts he enriched with his own judicious remarks. Half this trouble bestowed upon his young children would have given them an education far superior to any they could obtain from the temporary lessons of an itinerant master. I relate these facts, not from any want of gratitude to my excellent friend and kind father-in-law, but to point out an error that is too common, the bestowing on some as a gift what is due to others as a debt.

His taste for literature was to Mr. Elers himself a great support even in his most adverse circumstances. In my frequent visits to him at this time, I always found him resigned and cheerful, enjoying his constant resource in books, and applying himself to modern learning in his old age, with the same assiduity as he had in his youth applied to classical studies.

Mean time Mrs. Elers was left to manage as well as she could at Black-Bourton, and to take care of a number of helpless children, some of whom were but seven or eight years old. I stayed among them for some months, endeavouring to give to the youngest the first rudiments of education, and trying to conduct the affairs of the family in the best manner in my power. It was at last necessary that

I should leave them, and think of my own establishment.

Before I quit Oxfordshire, I may, though unconnected with my own affairs, mention a remarkable circumstance, that happened in the family of a gentleman in that neighbourhood. Mr. Lenthall (descended from the speaker Lenthall) lived at Burford, within a few miles of Black-Bourton. This gentleman, who was a very good master, had a very good butler. One morning the butler came to his master with a letter in his hand, and rubbing his forehead in that indescribable manner, which is an introduction to something which the person does not well know how to communicate, he told Mr. Lenthall, that he was very sorry to be obliged to quit his service.—"Why, what is the matter, John? has any body offended you? I thought you were as happy as any man could be in your situation?"—"Yes, please your honor, that's not the thing, but I have just got a prize in the lottery of 3,000*l.*, and I have all my life had a wish to live for one twelvemonth like a man of two or three thousand a year; and all I ask of your honor is, that, when I have spent the money, you will take me back again into your service."—"That is a promise," said Mr. Lenthall, "which I believe I may safely make, as there is very little probability of your wishing to return to be a butler, after having lived as a gentleman."

Mr. Lenthall was however mistaken. John spent nearly the amount of his ticket in less than a year. He had previously bought himself a small annuity to provide for his old age; when he had spent all the rest of his money, he actually returned to the service of Mr. Lenthall, and I saw him standing at

the sideboard at the time when I was in that country.

When I quitted Black-Bourton, I removed to a house, which I had taken upon the common at Hare Hatch, between Reading and Maidenhead, in Berkshire. I had still several terms to keep, before I could be called to the bar, and in the mean time it was necessary for me to live upon a small allowance from my father. My establishment at Hare Hatch was on a very moderate footing. I kept a phaeton with a pair of poneys; a man who took care of them, and of the garden; one man and two maid servants. By the good economy of my wife we lived comfortably. She superintended the care of the garden, which, under her management, was always productive. I had no farm, or any occupation out of doors. The neighbouring houses on the common were inhabited by wealthy but unostentatious people, who were in general contented to visit each other at tea time in the evening, where a game at cards and conversation entertained us till ten o'clock, when we retired to our respective homes. When I look back to this period of my life, I cannot help observing the change of tastes, which has taken place in my mind since that time. I then played at cards three or four times a week; my amusements have long since been very different: thirty, I may say almost forty, years of my life have since passed without a pack of cards having been opened in my house.

While I resided at Hare Hatch, I was in want of amusement, and had no cultivated society. My workshop, and frequent visits to smiths and coachmakers, and workmen of various sorts, at Reading, occupied the greatest part of the day. My reading

was chiefly scientific. It was not till some time afterwards, that I applied myself to general literature; nor till many years afterwards did I suppose, that I should ever become an author. When I went to London to keep term at the Temple, I became acquainted with my brother-in-law, Captain Elers, who lived much with three elderly ladies, Mrs. Blakes, in Great Russel Street, Bloomsbury. He soon grew attached to me, and, indeed, I found him to be one of the best creatures that ever existed. With him I went frequently to the Mrs. Blakes, who were nearly related to the Elers' family. Here I met with people of rank, and particularly with such as deserve the highest rank in society, those who were intent upon doing good. They were many of them indeed neither young nor fashionable; but they were polite and well-informed, eager to show attention to the old ladies whom they visited, and to entertain them by relating what was passing in the world. The Mrs. Blakes seldom went out themselves.

At this time, the celebrated *Comus* exhibited a variety of scientific deceptions in London. I soon discovered many of his secrets. As it was the fashion to go to see him, his tricks became the general subject of conversation; and I was able to entertain a number of Mrs. Blakes' friends, who were too old or too indolent to go to his exhibition. Among the ladies who visited the Mrs. Blakes was a Miss Dalston, the famous "Fanny, blooming fair," whom Lord Chesterfield has celebrated. She was related both to my wife and to Sir Francis Delaval by the Blakes. One evening, when she was of the company assembled at Mrs. Blakes', after I had been amusing them with some of Comus's feats, she told us, that

her relation, Sir Francis Delaval, had also discovered these secrets, and that he believed himself to be the only man in England who possessed them. "I shall, however," said she, "inform him, that I have another cousin as wise as he is."

This slight circumstance first introduced me to the acquaintance of Sir Francis Delaval. I beg the reader distinctly to understand, that my acquaintance with Sir Francis commenced but two or three years before his death. He invited me to his house, where, in six weeks, I saw more of what is called *the world*, than I should probably have seen elsewhere in as many years. I was about two and twenty. Much of what passed before my eyes was not at first perfectly distinct; but I observed, and by degrees, various circumstances that seemed to me extraordinary, and sometimes unaccountable, arranged themselves so as to become scenes as it were of a real comedy—Comedy, I may say, as to the representation before my eyes, but such as had frequently tragic consequences.

At first our joint exhibition of wonders occupied my attention. After arranging our contrivances in the house in Downing Street, where Sir Francis lived, by preconcerted confederacy, we had it in our power to execute surprising feats. Company of all sorts crowded our exhibitions. Sir Francis was known to every body; but I, as a stranger, was not suspected of being combined with the archfiend in deceiving the spectators. Feats, physically impossible without such assistance, were performed by seeming magic, and many were seriously alarmed by the prodigies which they witnessed. The ingenuity of some of the contrivances, that were employed in our deceptions, attracted the notice not only of those who

sought mere amusement, but of men of letters and science, who came to our exhibitions. This circumstance was highly grateful to Sir Francis, and advantageous to me. I, by these means, became acquainted with many men of eminence, to whom I could not at that period of my life have otherwise obtained familiar access. Among the number were Dr. Knight, of the British Museum; Dr. Watson; Mr. Wilson; Mr. Espinasse, the electrician; Foote, the author and actor, a man, who, beside his well known humour, possessed a considerable fund of real feeling; Macklin; and all the famous actors of the day. They resorted to a constant table, which was open to men of genius and merit, in every department of literature and science. I cannot say, that his guests were always "unelbowed by a player;" but I can truly assert, that none but those who were an honor to the stage, and who were admitted into the best company at other houses, were received at Sir Francis Delaval's. Macklin was our frequent visitor, as he was consulted as to every thing that was necessary for the getting up of a play, in which the late Duke of York was to be the principal actor. On this occasion I was requested by Sir Francis to fit up a theatre in Petty France, near the gate of the Park, and no trouble and expense were spared, to render it suitable to the reception of a royal performer. "The Fair Penitent" was the chosen piece, and the parts were cast in the following manner,

Sciolto	- - -	Mr. J. Delaval.
Horatio	- - -	Sir F. Delaval.
Altamont	- - -	Sir J. Wrottesly.
Lothario	- - -	The Duke of York.
Calista	- - -	Lady Stanhope.
Lavinia	- - -	Lady Mexborough.

The play was, as to some parts, extremely well performed. Calista was admirably acted by Lady Stanhope, and Horatio by Sir Francis. Sciolto was very well, and Lothario was as warm, as hasty, and as much in love, as the fair Calista could possibly wish. After the piece, Sir Francis and his friends from the real theatres retired to sup, and to criticise, at the King's Arms, Covent Garden. It was singular that Sir Francis, who was the projector of the scheme, preferred supping with his critical friends to partaking of an entertainment with the Duke of York, and a splendid company. I accompanied Sir Francis Delaval, and we passed a most agreeable evening. The company were, in fact, all performing amusing parts, though they were off the stage. After we had supped, Macklin called for a nightcap, and threw off his wig. This, it was whispered to me, was a signal of his intention to be entertaining. Plays, playwrights, enunciation, action, every thing belonging to eloquence of every species, was discussed. Angelo, the graceful fencing master, and Bensley, the actor, were of the party; Angelo was consulted by Bensley, on what he ought to do with his hands while he was speaking. Angelo told him, that it was impossible to prescribe what he should always do with them; but that it was easy to tell him what should *not* be done—"he should not put them into his breeches' pockets"—a custom to which poor Bensley was much addicted.

Pronunciation was discussed; the faults in our language in this particular were copiously enumerated. "For instance," said Macklin, "*Pare* me a *pair* of *pears*." You may take three words out of this sentence of the same sound, but of different meaning,

and I defy any man to pronounce them in such a manner as to discriminate the sounds, or to mark to any ear by his pronunciation, the difference between the verb, *to pare*, the noun of number, *a pair*, and the fruit, *pear*. The pompous Bensley undertook that Powel, who was remarkable for a good ear, should do this. Bensley, who mouthed prodigiously whilst he spoke, was put behind a curtain, that the motion of his lips might not assist Powel in judging what meaning he intended to express by each of the words as he pronounced them. One of the company was placed behind the curtain, and to him Bensley was previously to communicate, whether he proposed to pronounce the word denoting the action, the noun of number, or the fruit. Bensley failed so often, and so ridiculously, that he became quite angry, and charged Powel with wilful misapprehension. To defend himself Powel proposed that Holland should try his skill; but Holland had no better success. During these trials, I concerted by signs with Sir Francis a method of pointing out my meaning, and I offered to try my skill. The audience with difficulty restrained their contempt; but I took my place behind the curtain, and they were soon compelled to acknowledge, that I had a more distinct pronunciation, or that Sir Francis had more accurate hearing, than the rest of the company. Out of twenty experiments, I never failed more than two or three times, and in these I failed on purpose to prevent suspicion. I had made my confederate understand, that when I turned my right foot outward, as it appeared from beneath the curtain, I meant to say *pare*, to cut; when I turned it inward, *pair*, a couple; and when it was straight forward, *pear*, the fruit. We kept our own counsel,

and won unmerited applause. Amidst such trifling as this much sound criticism was mixed, which improved my literary taste, and a number of entertaining anecdotes were related, which informed my inexperienced mind with knowledge of the world.

In his youth, Sir Francis Delaval had a great love of frolic, and now, when he became intimate with me, he related to me some of the adventures of his early life, a few of which I may here mention.

Once, when he stood for the Borough of Andover, an opposition took place, and the corporation was so closely divided, that it was nearly a drawn battle between him and his competitor. One sturdy fellow among the voters held out against all applications: he declared, that he would vote for neither of the contending candidates. Sir Francis paid him a visit, and with much address endeavoured to discover some means of softening him. Sir Francis knew, that the man was unassailable by plain bribery; he therefore tried to tempt his ambition, his love of pleasure, his curiosity, in short, every passion that he thought could actuate this obstinate voter. Sir Francis found, that all the public spectacles of London were familiar to this man, who had often gone to town, on purpose to see various exhibitions. This seemed to have been his favourite relaxation. After many attempts, Sir Francis at last discovered, that this odd mortal had never seen a fire-eater, and that he did not believe the wonderful stories he had heard of fire-eaters; nor could it, he said, be imagined, that any man could vomit smoke, and flame, and fire from his mouth like a volcano. Sir Francis proposed to carry him immediately to town, and to show him the most accomplished eater of fire that had ever appeared.

The wary citizen of Andover suspected some trick, and could by no means be prevailed upon to go up to town. Our staunch candidate, never at a loss for resource, despatched instantly a trusty servant to London, requesting Angelo to come to his assistance. Among his various accomplishments, Angelo possessed the art of fire-eating in the utmost perfection; and though no pecuniary consideration could have induced him to make a display of his talents in such an art, yet to oblige Sir Francis, to whom all his friends were enthusiastically devoted, Angelo complied. A few hours after he received the request, he thundered into Andover in a chaise and four, express, to eat fire for Sir Francis Delaval's friend! When the obdurate voter saw this gentleman come down, and with such expedition, on purpose to entertain him, he began to yield. But when Angelo filled his mouth with torrents of flame, that burst from his lips and nostrils, and seemed to issue even from his eyes; when these flames changed to various colours, and seemed continually to increase in volume and intensity; our voter was quite melted: he implored Angelo to run no farther hazard; he confessed, that he did not think the devil himself could cast out such torrents of fire and flame, and that he believed Sir Francis had his Satanic Majesty for his friend, otherwise Sir Francis never could have prevailed upon him to break the vow which he had made not to vote for him.

For this time Sir Francis succeeded in his election; but on the next occasion he found his interest still lower than before in Andover. When he commenced his canvas, he went to the house of the mayor of Andover, who had hitherto been his friend, and with

whom he usually lodged. The mayor's lady had also been on his side formerly, but Sir Francis now perceived by her averted glances, that he had lost her favor. As he paid her some compliments while she made tea, the lady scornfully replied, that "his compliments to her tea were no more genuine than his tea-canisters." Now it seems that on the former occasion a promise had been made to her of a handsome tea-chest with silver canisters, in place of which she had received only plated canisters. Sir Francis was struck dumb by this discovery. When he recovered himself, he protested in the most energetic manner, that this trick had been put upon him, as well as upon her, by the person whom he had employed to purchase the tea-chest. He offered to produce his order to his agent, he pleaded his own character as a gentleman, and his known habits, not only of generosity, but of profusion. All would not do, the enraged mayoress treated his apologies with disdain, and his professions as counterfeit coin. What was to be done? With the mayor's vote he lost other voices. The corporation openly declared, that unless some person of wealth, and consequence, and honor, appeared from London, and proposed himself candidate, they would elect a gentleman in the neighbourhood, who had never canvassed the borough, rather than let Sir Francis come in. Next morning an express arrived early in Andover, with an eloquent and truly polite letter from Sir Robert Ladbroke, who was then father of the city, declaring his intention to stand candidate for the free and independent borough of Andover, intimating that his gouty state of health required care, and begging the mayor, with whom he had some acquaintance, to secure for him a well-aired

lodging. Mrs. Mayoress, in high exultation, had a bed prepared for the infirm Sir Robert in her best bed-chamber; supper was ready at an early hour, but no Sir Robert appeared. At length a courier arrived with a letter, excusing his presence that night, but promising that Sir Robert would breakfast next morning with the mayor. In the mean time the neighbouring gentleman, who had been thought of as rival candidate to Sir Francis Delaval, not finding himself applied to, and seeing no likelihood of success, had prudently left home to avoid being laughed at. The morning came, the breakfast passed, and the hour of election approached. An express was sent to hurry Sir Robert. The express was detained on the road, and when the writ was to be read, and the books opened, the old member, Sir Francis Delaval appeared unopposed on the hustings; his few friends gave their votes, and in default of the expected Sir Robert, who was never forth-coming, Sir Francis was duly elected.

Here ended Sir Francis Delaval's electioneering successes at Andover. His attorney's bill was yet to be discharged. It had been running on for many years, and though large sums had been paid on account, a prodigious balance still remained to be adjusted. The affair came before the King's Bench. Among a variety of exorbitant and monstrous charges there appeared the following article.

"To being thrown out of the window at the George Inn, Andover—to my leg being thereby broken—to surgeon's bill, and loss of time and business—all in the service of Sir F. B. Delaval.—Five hundred Pounds."

When this curious *item* came to be explained, it appeared, that the attorney had, by way of promoting

Sir Francis's interest in the borough, sent cards of invitation to the officers of a regiment in the town, in the name of the mayor and corporation, inviting them to dine and drink His Majesty's health on his birth-day. He, at the same time, wrote a similar invitation to the mayor and corporation, in the name of the officers of the regiment. The two companies met, complimented each other, eat a good dinner, drank a hearty bottle of wine to His Majesty's health, and prepared to break up. The commanding officer of the regiment, being the politest man in company, made a handsome speech to Mr. Mayor, thanking him for his hospitable invitation and entertainment. "No, colonel," replied the mayor, "it is to you that thanks are due by me and by my brother aldermen for your generous treat to us." The colonel replied with as much warmth as good breeding would allow: the mayor retorted with downright anger, swearing that he would not be choused by the bravest colonel in His Majesty's service.—"Mr. Mayor," said the colonel, "there is no necessity for displaying any vulgar passion on this occasion. Permit me to shew you, that I have here your obliging card of invitation." —"Nay, Mr. Colonel, here is no opportunity for bantering, there is your card."

Upon examining the cards, it was observed, that, notwithstanding an attempt to disguise it, both cards were written in the same hand by some person who had designed to make fools of them all. Every eye of the corporation turned spontaneously upon the attorney, who, of course, attended all public meetings. His impudence suddenly gave way, he faltered, and betrayed himself so fully by his confusion, that the colonel in a fit of summary justice, threw him out of

the window. For this, Sir Francis Delaval was charged five hundred pounds.—Whether he paid the money or not, I forget.

Some years before I was acquainted with him, Sir Francis, with Foote for his coadjutor, had astonished the town as a conjuror, and had obtained from numbers vast belief in his necromantic powers. This confidence he gained, chiefly by relating to those who consulted him the past events of their lives; thence he easily persuaded them, that he could foretell what would happen to them in future; and this persuasion frequently led to the accomplishment of his prophecies. Foote chose for the scene of their necromancy a large and dark room in an obscure court, I believe in Leicester Fields. The entrance to this room was through a very long, narrow, winding passage, lighted up by a few dim lamps. The conjuror was seated upon a kind of ottoman in the middle of the room, with a huge drum before him, which contained his familiar spirit. He was dressed in the eastern fashion, with an enormous turban, and a long white beard. His assistant held a white wand in his hand, and with a small stick struck the drum from time to time, from which there issued a deep and melancholy sound. His dragoman answered the questions that were asked of him by his visitants, while the conjuror preserved the most dignified silence, only making signs, which his interpreter translated into words. When a question was asked, the visitant was kept at a distance from the drum, from which the oracle seemed to proceed. The former habits, and extensive acquaintance of Sir F. Delaval, and of his associates, who, in fact, were all the men of gallantry of his day, furnished him with innumerable anecdotes of secret intrigues,

which were some of them known only to themselves and their paramours. Foote had acquired a considerable knowledge of the gallantries of the city; and the curiosity which had been awakened and gratified at the west end of the town by the disclosure of certain ridiculous adventures in the city, gave to the conjuror his first celebrity. It was said, that he had revealed secrets that had been buried for years in obscurity. Ladies as well as gentlemen among the fools of quality were soon found, to imitate the dames of the city in idle and pernicious curiosity; and under the sanction of fashion, the delusion spread rapidly through all ranks. Various attempts were made to deceive the conjuror under false names, and by a substitution of persons; but he in general succeeded in detecting these, and his fame stood at one time so high, as to induce persons of *the first consideration* to consult him secretly. His method of obtaining sudden influence over the incredulous was by telling them some small detached circumstances, which had happened to them a short time before, and which they thought could scarcely be known to any body but themselves. This he effected by means of an agent, whom he employed at the door as a porter. This man was acquainted with all the intriguing footmen in London, and whilst he detained the servants of his master's visitants as they entered, he obtained from them various information, which was communicated by his fellow servants through a pipe to the drum of the conjuror. It was said, that in the course of a few weeks, while this delusion lasted, more matches were made, and more intrigues were brought to a conclusion, by Sir Francis Delaval and his associates, than all the meddling old ladies in London could

have effected or even suspected in as many months. Among the marriages was that of Lady Nassau Paulet with Sir Francis himself. This was the great object of the whole contrivance. As soon as it was accomplished, the conjurer prudently decamped, before an inquiry too minute could be made into his supernatural powers. Lady Nassau Paulet had a very large fortune, I believe eighty thousand pounds, of all which Sir Francis Delaval became possessed by this marriage. Her ladyship died soon afterwards, and her fortune did not long continue to console her husband for her loss. The whole of the eighty thousand pounds he contrived soon to dissipate.

CHAPTER VI.

Whatever knowledge of the world Sir Francis Delaval and Foote had acquired, I collected at an easy rate from their conversation. The love of adventure was not quite extinguished in Sir Francis, when I first knew him. It was some time after the death of Lady Nassau Paulet, and Sir Francis was looking out for another wife, and another fortune.

Lady Jacob, the widow of a Sir something Jacob, was then an object of pursuit to the fortune-hunting men of fashion, and Sir Francis was of the number. His rivals were mere empty coxcombs. During several tiresome evenings, that I walked the round of Ranelagh in their company, I never heard from them a single sentiment or expression worth repeating. Grimace, and a waterdog shake of the head, supplied the place of conversation. The widow had some cleverness, though it had not been much cultivated by education; and I plainly saw her disgust at the nonsense which she endured. I remember that one of her honourable lovers, after a composing prelude of fashionable fatuity, with a solemn air and complacent smile requested his mistress's opinion upon the propriety of having the candles snuffed.

The lady saw Sir Francis Delaval's superiority to his competitors in abilities and address, but his character for gallantry could not be unnoticed by the wary widow. She laughed at his rivals for attempting

to vie with him, but at the same time she told him that, though he was far superior to any of them in talents and accomplishments, yet she must be sure of his reformation, before she could venture to make him her master. That he must undergo a moral probation. This was a species of trial not much to the taste of Sir Francis, he therefore abandoned the field to his insipid rivals.

The widow, after examining maturely the pretensions of these various suitors, wisely dismissed them all, and married a young Irish captain, whose claims to her favor fairly rested on his sword and his figure.

Sir Francis Delaval was soon afterwards engaged with other objects. He had a universal acquaintance with all the gay and all the gambling world. Lord March, afterwards Duke of Queensberry, Jennison Shaftoe, Lord Eglintoun, Mr. Thynne, Lord Effingham, Colonel Brereton, and numbers whose names have long since been forgotten, consulted Sir Francis in their schemes at Newmarket; his ingenuity and never failing resources made his acquaintance highly valuable to such gentlemen of the turf club, as made bets out of the common line of gambling. A coachmaker's journeyman had been taken notice of by Lord March, for his being able to run with a wheel upon the pavement with uncommon speed, which his lordship had ascertained at leisure with his stop-watch. A waiter in Betty's fruit shop, in St. James's Street, was also famous for running. His speed Lord March minuted, and upon some opportunity he spoke of the coachmaker's running, as if he believed that the wheel assisted instead of retarding his speed. This brought on discussion, and Lord March offered to lay a large wager, that the coachmaker's journeyman

should run with the wheel of his lordship's carriage, which was at the door, faster than the waiter who was in the room. The bet was taken up to a considerable amount, and the time and place determined. Lord March well knew, that large bets would depend on each side among the frequenters of the *turf;* and that each of the competitors would be engaged to try their speed, that those who backed them might know what they had to depend upon. He, therefore, had the waiter carefully watched, and had his speed ascertained; he also had experiments tried by the journeyman coachmaker. By these means he thought himself almost certain of success, and he and his friends took up as many bets as they could before the day appointed for the race. The gentlemen on the other side had not been inattentive; and having observed that the coachmaker always ran with one particular wheel, which was considerably higher than that with which Lord March had betted he should run; and being well-assured by coachmakers, whom they consulted, that a man could not roll a small wheel nearly so fast as a large one; they reckoned upon this circumstance as decisive in their favor, because the hind wheel of Lord March's carriage happened to be uncommonly small. By some means their hopes in this advantage was discovered, but not till the very day before the match was to be determined. Lord March immediately tried the rate of his racer with the wheel with which he was actually to run, and found such an evident difference from that upon which he had depended, as to leave him very little chance of success. He mentioned his distress to Sir Francis Delaval, who instantly suggested a remedy. He applied immediately to friends

whom he had in the board of works, for a number of planks sufficient to cover a pathway on the course, where the men were to run. By the help of numbers, with the aid of moonlight, he laid these planks upon blocks of a height sufficient to raise the nave of his low wheel to the height of that with which the coach-maker had been accustomed to run. The jockey club allowed the expedient, and Lord March won his wager.

Bets of this sort were in fashion in those days, and one proposal of what was difficult and uncommon led to another. A famous match was at that time pending at Newmarket between two horses, that were in every respect as nearly equal as possible. Lord March, one evening at Ranelagh, expressed his regret to Sir Francis Delaval, that he was not able to attend Newmarket at the next meeting. "I am obliged," said he, "to stay in London; I shall, however, be at the Turf Coffee-House; I shall station fleet horses on the road, to bring me the earliest intelligence of the event of the race, and I shall manage my bets accordingly."

I asked at what time in the evening he expected to know who was winner.—He said about nine in the evening. I asserted, that I should be able to name the winning horse at four o'clock in the afternoon. Lord March heard my assertion with so much incredulity, as to urge me to defend myself; and at length I offered to lay five hundred pounds, that I would in London name the winning horse at Newmarket, at five o'clock in the evening of the day when the great match in question was to be run. Sir Francis having looked at me for encouragement, offered to lay five hundred pounds on my side; Lord

Eglintoun did the same; Shaftoe and somebody else took up their bets; and the next day we were to meet at the Turf Coffee-House, to put our bets in writing. After we went home, I explained to Sir Francis Delaval the means that I proposed to use. I had early been acquainted with Wilkins's "Secret and swift Messenger:" I had also read in Hooke's Works of a scheme of this sort, and I had determined to employ a telegraph nearly resembling that which I have since published.* The machinery I knew could be prepared in a few days.

Sir Francis immediately perceived the feasibility of my scheme, and indeed its certainty of success. It was summer time, and by employing a sufficient number of persons, we could place our machines so near as to be almost out of the power of the weather. When we all met at the Turf Coffee-House, I offered to double my bet, so did Sir Francis. The gentlemen on the opposite side were willing to accept my offer; but before I would conclude my wager, I thought it fair to state to Lord March, that I did not depend upon the fleetness or strength of horses to carry the desired intelligence, but upon other means, which I had, of being informed in London which horse had actually won at Newmarket, between the time when the race should be concluded and five o'clock in the evening. My opponents thanked me for my candor, reconsidered the matter, and declined the bet. My friends blamed me extremely for giving up such an advantageous speculation. None of them, except Sir Francis, knew the means which I had intended to employ, and he kept them a profound

* In the Memoirs of the Royal Irish Academy, and in Nicholson's Journal for October 1798, quarto, vol. ii. p. 320.

secret, with a view to use them afterwards for his own purposes. With that energy which characterised every thing in which he engaged, he immediately erected, under my directions, an apparatus between his house and part of Piccadilly; an apparatus which was never suspected to be telegraphic. I also set up a night telegraph between a house which Sir F. Delaval occupied at Hampstead, and one to which I had access in Great Russel Street, Bloomsbury. This nocturnal telegraph answered well, but was too expensive for common use.

Upon my return home to Hare Hatch, I tried many experiments on different modes of telegraphic communication. My object was to combine secrecy with expedition. For this purpose I intended to employ windmills, which might be erected for common economical uses, and which might at the same time afford easy means of communication from place to place upon extraordinary occasions. There is a windmill at Nettlebed, which can be distinctly seen with a good glass from Assy Hill, between Maidenhead and Henley, the highest ground in England, south of the Trent. With the assistance of Mr. Perrot, of Hare Hatch, I ascertained the practicability of my scheme between these places, which are nearly sixteen miles asunder.

I have had occasion to shew my claim to the revival of this invention in modern times, and in particular to prove, that I had practised telegraphic communication in the year 1767, long before it was ever attempted in France. To establish these truths, I obtained from Mr. Perrot, a Berkshire gentleman, who resided in the neighbourhood of Hare Hatch, and who was witness to my experiments, his testimony

to the facts which I have just related. I have his letter, and, before its contents were published in the Memoirs of the Irish Academy for the year 1796, I shewed it to Lord Charlemont, President of the Royal Irish Academy.

During my residence at Hare Hatch, another wager was proposed by me among our acquaintance, the purport of which was, that I undertook to find a man, who should, with the assistance of machinery, walk faster than any other person that could be produced. The machinery which I intended to employ was a huge hollow wheel, made very light, within side of which, in a barrel of six feet diameter, a man should walk, whilst he stepped thirty inches, the circumference of the large wheel, or rather wheels, would revolve five feet on the ground; and as the machine was to roll on planks, and on a plane somewhat inclined, when once the *vis inertiæ* of the machine should be overcome, it would carry on the man within it as fast as he could possibly walk. I had provided means of regulating the motion, so that the wheel should not run away with its master. I had the wheel made, and when it was so nearly completed as to require but a few hours' work to finish it, I went to London for Lord Effingham, to whom I had promised, that he should be present at the first experiment made with it. But the bulk and extraordinary appearance of my machine had attracted the notice of the country neighbourhood; and taking advantage of my absence, some idle curious persons went to the carpenter I employed, who lived on Hare Hatch common. From him they obtained the great wheel, which had been left by me in his care. It was not finished. I had not yet furnished it with the means

of stopping or moderating its motion. A young lad got into it, his companions launched it on a path which led gently down hill towards a very steep chalk-pit. This pit was at such a distance, as to be out of their thoughts, when they set the wheel in motion. On it ran. The lad withinside plied his legs with all his might. The spectators, who at first stood still to behold the operation, were soon alarmed by the shouts of their companion, who perceived his danger. The vehicle became quite ungovernable, the velocity increased as it ran down hill. Fortunately the boy contrived to jump from his rolling prison before it reached the chalk-pit; but the wheel went on with such velocity, as to outstrip its pursuers, and, rolling over the edge of the precipice, it was dashed to pieces.

The next day, when I came to look for my machine, intending to try it upon some planks, which had been laid for it, I found to my no small disappointment, that the object of all my labors and my hopes was lying at the bottom of a chalk-pit, broken into a thousand pieces. I could not at that time afford to construct another wheel of this sort, and I cannot therefore determine what might have been the success of my scheme.

As I am on the subject of carriages, I shall mention a sailing carriage, that I tried on this common. The carriage was light, steady, and ran with amazing velocity. One day, when I was preparing for a sail in it, with my friend and school-fellow, Mr. William Foster, my wheel-boat escaped from its moorings, just as we were going to step on board. With the utmost difficulty I overtook it, and as I saw three or four stage-coaches on the road, and feared that this sailing

chariot might frighten their horses, I, at the hazard of my life, got into my carriage while it was under full sail, and then, at a favorable part of the road, I used the means I had of guiding it easily out of the way. But the sense of the mischief which must have ensued, if I had not succeeded in getting into the machine at the proper place, and stopping it at the right moment, was so strong, as to deter me from trying any more experiments on this carriage in such a dangerous place.

Such should never be attempted except on a large common, *at a distance from a high road.* It may not however be amiss to suggest, that upon a long extent of iron railway, in an open country, carriages properly constructed might make profitable voyages from time to time with sails instead of horses; for though a constant or regular intercourse could not be thus carried on, yet goods of a certain sort, that are saleable at any time, might be stored till wind and weather were favorable.

When the time came for completing my terms at the Temple, I went again to London, and my intimacy with Sir F. Delaval was renewed. Beside the incidental schemes and amusements which I have mentioned, one great object had long filled his mind. The Duke of York was in love with Sir Francis Delaval's sister, Lady Stanhope. Her husband, Sir William Stanhope, was dying, and the great object was to keep the duke's flame alive. Every body of abilities about the duke, whom Sir Francis could influence, was engaged in supporting this project.

But the hand of death put a stop to the scheme. The Duke of York, in a tour to Italy, went to some ball in Rome, and, after dancing violently, caught

cold in returning by night to his residence, which was at a considerable distance from the place of entertainment: he was seized with a fever, and died. Suspicions of poison arose; but the Prince of Monaco, at whose palace he died, came over to London, and dissipated this surmise.

By the death of the Duke of York, Sir Francis found all his schemes of aggrandisement blasted. Though a man of great strength of mind, and of vivacity that seemed to be untameable, his spirits and health sunk under this disappointment. His friends and physician laughed at his complaints. Of Herculean strength, and, till this period, of uninterrupted health, they could not bring themselves to believe, that a pain in his breast, of which he complained, was of any serious consequence; on the contrary, they treated him as an hypochondriac, whom a generous diet, amusement, and country air, would soon restore. He was ordered, however, to use a steam-bath, which was then in vogue at Knightsbridge. I went with him there one day, the last I ever saw of him! He expressed for me a great deal of kindness and esteem: and then seriously told me he felt, that, notwithstanding his natural strength of body and mind, and in contradiction of the opinion of all the physicians, he had not long to live. He acknowledged, that his mind was affected as well as his body.

"Let my example," said he, "warn you of a fatal "error, into which I have fallen, and into which you "might probably fall, if you did not counteract the "propensities which might lead you into it. I have "pursued amusement, or rather frolic, instead of "turning my ingenuity and talents to useful pur-

" poses. I am sensible," continued he, " that my " mind was fit for greater things, than any of which " I am now, or of which I was ever supposed to be " capable. I am able to speak fluently in public, " and I have perceived, that my manner of speaking " has always increased the force of what I have said. " Upon various useful subjects I am not deficient " in information ; and if I had employed half the " time and half the pains in cultivating serious " knowledge, which I have wasted in exerting my " powers upon trifles, instead of making myself merely " a conspicuous figure at public places of amuse- " ment, instead of giving myself up to gallantry " which disgusted and disappointed me, instead of " dissipating my fortune and tarnishing my character, " I should have distinguished myself in the senate " or the army, I should have become a USEFUL " member of society, and an honour to my family. " Remember my advice, young man! Pursue what " is USEFUL to mankind, you will satisfy them, and, " what is better, you will satisfy yourself."

Two mornings afterwards he was found dead in his bed.* Thus ended Sir Francis Blake Delaval. Descended from illustrious ancestors, born with every personal advantage, of a countenance peculiarly prepossessing, tall, strong, athletic, and singularly active,

* His friends, perhaps to obviate any suspicion of his having destroyed himself, had his body opened, and the physician, who attended, informed me, that his death was probably occasioned by an unnatural distension of his stomach, which seemed to have lost the power of collapsing. This they attributed to his drinking immoderate quantities of water and small beer. He always had a large jug of beer left by his bed-side at night, which was usually empty before morning.—Whether this was cause or effect still remains uncertain.

he excelled in every manly exercise, was endowed with courage, and with extraordinary presence of mind; yet all in vain. His parting advice was not thrown away upon me. Indeed I had heard and seen sufficient to convince me that a life of pleasure is not a life of happiness, and that to the broad gaiety of public festivity there frequently succeeds insupportable ennui in private—ennui, which often drives men to the worst of vices merely for emotion and occupation.

CHAPTER VII.

After Sir Francis Delaval's death, I returned home, and resumed my occupations and my amusements in mechanics. These led me to an acquaintance with Mr. Gainsborough, a Presbyterian clergyman, brother to the celebrated painter of that name. He lived at Henley upon Thames, within a few miles of me. We became intimately acquainted, and I do not think, that I have ever known a man of a more inventive genius.

As many parts of the high land in the neighbourhood of Henley were ill supplied with water, every contrivance, that promised to facilitate the means of raising it, was eagerly adopted. This induced Mr. Gainsborough to turn his thoughts to this subject. His inventive faculty might have been employed more advantageously; for it must be obvious, even to those who are but slightly conversant with mechanics, that no possible application of the power of men or animals can alter their effect in any considerable degree, and that the application of wind is too variable, and of steam commonly too complicated, for domestic purposes. He notwithstanding erected several ingenious hydraulic machines in various parts of the country, which shewed a fertile invention, and in all their parts a sound knowledge of the principles of mechanics. In many instances

he gave a large scope to his genius in obviating local difficulties, and inventing tools to execute his purposes in country places, where he could not enjoy the resources of the capital. He was besides an excellent and most accurate workman, and had he early turned his thoughts to the construction of timepieces for ascertaining the longitude, I make no doubt, that he would have succeeded as well as any man who could have been his competitor. I believe I took from him hints of some small contrivances, which I have since executed; but were he alive he would not complain. He was too much my friend, and he was possessed of too much generosity, to suppose that I was either so poor in resources, or so mean in disposition, as to steal from any man.

Amongst other contrivances, I remember to have seen a dial, which shewed time distinctly to one minute, without the assistance of wheelwork or microscopes. For a tide-mill of his invention he obtained a premium of 50*l.* from the Society for the Encouragement of Arts.

One word more in remembrance of this worthy and ingenious gentleman. He planned and executed the handsome road, that goes up the steep hill near Henley. In cutting down this hill, he employed carriages without horses, by means of a large horizontal pulley, which enabled the full carriages, as they went down the hill, to draw up the empty ones.

I formerly mentioned, that on my return from Ireland, when I staid a day at Chester, I had heard from the owner of the Microcosm, that Dr. Darwin, of Lichfield, had invented and constructed a carriage upon a new principle. Upon the principle, that, in turning round, it continued to stand on four points,

nearly at equal distances from each other; whereas in carriages with a crane-neck, when the four wheels are *locked* under the perch, the fore carriage is very unsteady, being supported upon only three points. From this hint, without having seen the Doctor's carriage, I constructed a very handsome phaeton upon this principle. I had it with me in London. Sir Francis Delaval had taken a fancy to it, and had ordered another from Monk, the person who had made mine, and who upon this occasion first came from the country to settle in Town. Upon its being approved of by the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, both on account of the manner in which the fore carriage locked, and also on account of a sure and simple method of disengaging horses should they become unruly, I told the society, that I had taken the hint of the contrivance for preventing accidents to a carriage in turning, from a description that had been given me of a carriage of Dr. Darwin's, of Lichfield; I wrote an account to the Doctor of the reception which his scheme had met with from the Society of Arts, &c. The Doctor wrote me a very civil answer; and though, as I afterwards found out, he took me for a coachmaker, he invited me to his house. An invitation which I accepted in the ensuing summer.

When I arrived at Lichfield, I went to inquire whether the Doctor was at home. I was shewn into a room, where I found Mrs. Darwin. I told her my name. She said the Doctor expected me, and that he intended to be at home before night. There were books and prints in the room, of which I took occasion to speak. Mrs. Darwin asked me to drink tea, and I perceived that I owed to my literature the

pleasure of passing the evening with this most agreeable woman. We walked and conversed upon various literary subjects till it was dark, when Mrs. Darwin seeming to be surprised that the Doctor had not come home, I offered to take my leave: but she told me, that I had been expected for some days, and that a bed had been prepared for me; I heard some orders given to the housemaid, who had destined a different room for my reception from that which her mistress had upon second thoughts appointed. I perceived that the maid examined me attentively, but I could not guess the reason. When supper was nearly finished, a loud rapping at the door announced the Doctor. There was a bustle in the hall, which made Mrs. Darwin get up and go to the door. Upon her exclaiming, that they were bringing in a dead man, I went to the hall: I saw some persons, directed by one whom I guessed to be Doctor Darwin, carrying a man who appeared motionless.

"He is not dead," said Doctor Darwin. "He is only dead drunk. I found him," continued the Doctor, "nearly suffocated in a ditch; I had him lifted into my carriage, and brought hither, that we might take care of him to night."

Candles came, and what was the surprise of the Doctor, and of Mrs. Darwin, to find that the person whom he had saved was Mrs. Darwin's brother! who, for the first time in his life, as I was assured, had been intoxicated in this manner, and who would undoubtedly have perished, had it not been for Doctor Darwin's humanity.

During this scene I had time to survey my new friend, Doctor Darwin. He was a large man, fat, and rather clumsy; but intelligence and benevolence were

Erasmus Darwin, M.D.

Drawn & Engraved by H. Meyer

from a Bronze Bust now in the Possession of Dr. Sacheverell Darwin

painted in his countenance: he had a considerable impediment in his speech a defect, which is in general painful to others; but the Doctor repaid his auditors so well for making them wait for his wit or his knowledge, that he seldom found them impatient.

When his brother was disposed of, he came to supper, and I thought that he looked at Mrs. Darwin, as if he was somewhat surprised, when he heard that I had passed the whole evening in her company. After she withdrew, he entered into conversation with me upon the carriage that I had made, and upon the remarks that fell from some members of the society to whom I had shewn it. I satisfied his curiosity, and having told him, that my carriage was in the town, and that he could see it whenever he pleased; we talked upon other mechanical subjects, and afterwards on various branches of knowledge, which necessarily produced allusions to classical literature; by these he discovered, that I had received the education of a gentleman.

"Why! I thought," said the Doctor, "that you were only a coachmaker!"—"That was the reason," said I, "that you looked surprised at finding me at supper with Mrs. Darwin. But you see, Doctor, how superior in discernment ladies are even to the most learned gentlemen; I assure you, that I had not been in the room five minutes, before Mrs. Darwin asked me to tea."

The next day I was introduced to some literary persons, who then resided at Lichfield, and among the foremost to Miss Seward. How much of my future life has depended upon this visit to Lichfield! How little could I then foresee, that my having examined and understood the Microcosm at Chester

should lead me to a place, and into an acquaintance, which would otherwise, in all human probability, have never fallen within my reach! Miss Seward was at this time in the height of youth and beauty, of an enthusiastic temper, a votary of the muses, and of the most eloquent and brilliant conversation. Our mutual acquaintance was soon made, and it continued to be for many years of my life a source of never-failing pleasure. It seems that Mrs. Darwin had a little pique against Miss Seward, who had in fact been her rival with the Doctor. These ladies lived upon good terms, but there frequently occurred little competitions, which amused their friends, and enlivened the uniformity that so often renders a country town insipid. The evening after my arrival, Mrs. Darwin invited Miss Seward, and a very large party of her friends, to supper. I was placed beside Miss Seward, and a number of lively sallies escaped her, that set the table in good humour. I remember, for we frequently remember the merest trifles which happen at an interesting period of our life, that she repeated some of Prior's Henry and Emma, of which she was always fond, and dwelling upon Emma's tenderness, she cited the care that Emma proposed to take of her lover, if he were wounded,

> "To bind his wounds my finest lawns I'd tear,
> Wash them with tears, and wipe them with my hair."

I acknowledged, that tearing her finest lawns, even in a wild forest, would be a real sacrifice from a fine lady; and that washing wounds with salt water, though a very severe remedy, was thought to be salutary; but I could not think, that wiping them with hair could be either a salutary or an elegant operation. I represented, that the lady, who must have

had by her own account a choice of lawns, might have employed some of the coarse sort for this operation, instead of having recourse to her hair. I paid Miss Seward, however, some compliments on her own beautiful tresses, and at that moment the watchful Mrs. Darwin took this opportunity of drinking *Mrs. Edgeworth's health*. Miss Seward's surprise was manifest. But the mirth this unexpected discovery made fell but lightly upon its objects, for Miss Seward, with perfect good humour, turned the laugh in her favor. The next evening the same society reassembled at another house, and for several ensuing evenings I passed my time in different agreeable companies in Lichfield.

Mr. Bolton, of Birmingham, happened at this time to call upon Doctor Darwin. I shewed him and a few of his friends some of those deceptions of Comus, which I had discovered. They were particularly *à propos*, as at that time Mr. Bolton was making a large number of magnets for exportation. He asked me to his house on Snow-Hill, in Birmingham. He was at this period just going to remove to the wild heath, which has since been converted into a garden, interspersed with cheerful villas, by his talents and energy. Mr. Bolton very kindly sent a proper person with me through the principal manufactories of Birmingham. There, and at Soho, I became in a few hours intimately acquainted with many parts of practical mechanicks, which I could not otherwise have learned in many months.

At my return to my house at Hare Hatch, in Berkshire, I applied with fresh energy to mechanical invention, and to the execution of various contrivances. I was now however aware, that invention must be grievously wasted, where there is not a competent

knowledge of what has been previously done by others. I therefore carefully looked over books of mechanical inventions, wherever I could find them; and I many times discovered, that what had appeared to me new, and entirely my own, had been printed a hundred years ago. Even the method of locking carriages in turning, invented by Dr. Darwin and by me, had been employed in a sailing carriage described in the "Machines approuvées" of the French Royal Academy. I entreat readers who may not have any taste for subjects of this sort, to pardon me for thus detailing my mechanical pursuits; it is necessary to shew the progress of my mind.

I was riding one day in a country, that was enclosed by walls of an uncommon height; and upon its being asserted, that it would be impossible for a person to leap such walls, I offered for a wager to produce a wooden horse, that should carry me safely over the highest wall in the country. It struck me, that, if a machine were made with eight legs, four only of which should stand upon the ground at one time; if the remaining four were raised up into the body of the machine, and if this body were divided into two parts, sliding, or rather rolling on cylinders, one of the parts, and the legs belonging to it, might in two efforts be projected over the wall by a person in the machine; and the legs belonging to this part might be let down to the ground, and then the other half of the machine might have its legs drawn up, and be projected over the wall, and so on alternately. This idea by degrees developed itself in my mind, so as to make me perceive, that as one half of the machine was always a road for the other half, and that such a machine never rolled upon the ground, a carriage

might be made, which should carry a road for itself. It is already certain, that a carriage moving on an iron rail-way may be drawn with a fourth part of the force requisite to draw it on a common road.

After having made a number of models of my machine, that should carry and lay down its own road, I took out a patent to secure to myself the principle; but the term of my patent has been long since expired, without my having been able to unite to my satisfaction in this machine strength with sufficient lightness, and with regular motion, so as to obtain the advantages I proposed.

As an encouragement to perseverance, I assure my readers, that I never lost sight of this scheme during forty years; that I have made considerably above one hundred working models upon this principle, in a great variety of forms; and that, although I have not yet been able to accomplish my project, I am still satisfied that it is feasible. The experience, which I have acquired by this industry, has overpaid me for the trifling disappointments I have met with; and I have gained far more in amusement, than I have lost by unsuccessful labor. Indeed the only mortification that affected me was my discovering many years after I had taken out my patent, that the rudiments of my whole scheme were mentioned in an obscure memoir of the French Academy.

About the year 1769, I made a phaeton of uncommon lightness, and so furnished with springs, that each wheel could rise over any obstacle in its way. This carriage had no perch, and had all the advantages, which are now (in 1808) claimed by the patentee for carriages without perches. In fact, however, a light perch is no disadvantage to a carriage,

but on the contrary adds to its security. I sent this carriage to the "Society of Arts, &c.;" and at the same time I sent a model of a very large umbrella for covering haystacks, also of a waggon divided into two parts, each having four wheels, so that the roads never sustained more than half the weight of the common load. By connecting these waggons, and applying the horses to the foremost, the necessity of having an additional driver was prevented, which would be required if horses were put to each part of the divided carriage. The load by these means need not be piled so high as usual.

I sent also to the Society of Arts a machine for cutting turnips, which consisted simply of a circular trough with a chopping knife moving on a pin in the centre, so that the person who worked it had nothing to do but to walk round the circle, and to lift the cutter up and down, as a turner works his paring knife. This was put in competition with the machine for cutting turnips, which is now in common use, and for which the society adjudged to Mr. Edgehill the premium. Very little difference was perceived in the performance of our machines; and I still employ my own, because it can be made any where, of any coarse timber, has but one knife, which can be easily kept from rust, and readily sharpened; in short it performs nearly as much work as Mr. Edgehill's turnip-cutter, and does not cost one fourth part as much. The machine which I use is a trough on three legs, about five feet long, a foot wide, and a segment of a circle of six feet diameter.

For these models and machines the society presented me with their gold medal in 1769. I laid before that society a machine for measuring the force

exerted by horses in drawing ploughs and waggons, and in giving motion to machinery of all sorts. It consisted of a swing-tree bar that contained two levers, to one end of each of which the traces were attached, and the other end compressed a spiral spring. There was an index adapted to the swing-tree bar, on which the longest end of one of the levers pointed out the power, which it exerted to bend the spring. This instrument I explained to the Committee of Mechanics of the Society of Arts, in the year 1771. I went abroad in that year, and during my absence a person belonging to the society obtained credit for exhibiting a similar machine. I took no notice of this transaction, as it was of a trifling nature. I have since frequently tried this instrument, and have found it insufficient. It registers only the greatest exertion of the draft; it does not give the sum of the whole exertion in a given time. There is a method, however, by which the force of draft may be ascertained; I hope to have leisure, to put it into practice, and by these means to determine on the subject of wheel-carriages the discordant opinions of men of science and men of business, or of those who call themselves *practical men;* I also hope to decide the different advantages of various ploughs, and other instruments of husbandry, whether drawn by horses or moved by men. This is a matter of no small importance, considering the enormous expense, to which carriers and farmers are put, in consequence of erroneous opinions, or of new and unfounded pretensions to improvement. Were a course of experiments set on foot on this subject, upon an extensive and liberal plan, which should be open to the public at large, and

which should be made upon full sized carts, ploughs, and waggons, the common sense and ocular conviction of all ranks of people would soon put disputes on these points to rest. I mean so far as relates to such machines as are in use at present. Whenever any new invention makes its appearance, it should of course be submitted to similar trials. Attempts to impose upon the public would by these means be rendered abortive.

I should have mentioned in its proper place, that, in the year 1768, the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce, gave me their silver medal for a perambulator, which, upon trial in Coldbath fields, answered with such precision, as would, from proving too much, have led to a suspicion of error, and might have discredited belief in its performance altogether, had not the experiment been witnessed by a large committee of the society. It was entered immediately upon their journals. A mile was first cautiously measured by a common chain—afterwards by the perambulator, and again by the same machine returning. The distance measured, going and returning, did not differ so much as one inch. This instrument is described in the Memoirs of the Society, and in other books. I have found, that upon ground, where it met with no interruption from hedges and ditches, it has never failed with me to measure more accurately, and with much greater expedition, than the chain.

An uncommon instance of plagiarism occurred in Ireland relative to this perambulator. About twenty years after I had received my medal, a person presented my perambulator, without any change in its

construction, as his own invention, to the Dublin Society. I saw it there, and observed an inscription with the name—which I forget—of the person who presented it, and these lines from Horace,

> "Si quid novisti rectius istis,
> Candidus imperti; si non, his utere mecum."

I have endeavoured to collect together whatever related to mechanics during my residence at Hare Hatch, without attending strictly to the order of time; for it is better to consider the course of one subject uniformly, and then to go back and take up another, than to interrupt the narrative by an ineffectual attempt to preserve strict chronology.

I have not during the account of the foregoing period of my life mentioned my children. I said that I married in 1763. My eldest son was born at Black-Bourton, in Oxfordshire, in 1764. After my return from Ireland in 1765, when I established myself at Hare Hatch, I formed a strong desire to educate my son according to the system of Rousseau. His Emile had made a great impression upon my young mind, as it had done upon the imaginations of many far my superiors in age and understanding. His work had then all the power of novelty, as well as all the charms of eloquence; and when I compared the many plausible ideas it contains, with the obvious deficiencies and absurdities, that I saw in the treatment of children in almost every family, with which I was acquainted, I determined to make a fair trial of Rousseau's system. My wife complied with my wishes, and the body and mind of my son were to be left as much as possible to the education of nature and of accident. I was but twenty-three years old, when I formed this resolution; I steadily pursued it for

several years, notwithstanding the opposition with which I was embarrassed by my friends and relations, and the ridicule by which I became immediately assailed on all quarters.

I dressed my son without stockings, with his arms bare, in a jacket and trowsers such as are quite common at present, but which were at that time novel and extraordinary. I succeeded in making him remarkably hardy: I also succeeded in making him fearless of danger, and, what is more difficult, capable of bearing privation of every sort. He had all the virtues of a child bred in the hut of a savage, and all the knowledge of *things*, which could well be acquired at an early age by a boy bred in civilized society. I say knowledge of *things*, for of books he had less knowledge at seven or eight years old, than most children have at four or five. Of mechanics he had a clearer conception, and in the application of what he knew more invention, than any child I had then seen. He was bold, free, fearless, generous; he had a ready and keen use of all his senses, and of his judgment. But he was not disposed to *obey:* his exertions generally arose from his own will; and, though he was what is commonly called good-tempered and good-natured, though he generally pleased by his looks, demeanour, and conversation, he had too little deference for others, and he shewed an invincible dislike to control. With me, he was always what I wished; with others, he was never any thing but what he wished to be himself. He was, by all who saw him, whether of the higher or lower classes, taken notice of; and by all considered as very clever. I speak of a child between seven and eight years old, and to prevent interruption in my narrative, I here represent the effects of his education from three

Thomas Day, Esq.r

Engraved by Henry Meyer
from a Picture by Wright of Derby

London: Cadell and Davies, 1804

to eight years old, during which period I pursued Rousseau's plans.

I now come to what I consider as a new era in my life, the commencement of my acquaintance with Mr. Day. He lived at this time with his father and mother at Barehill, in Berkshire. He came from Oxford during vacation, and hearing that I had been of the same college with him, and a pupil of his tutor Mr. Russell, he came to Hare Hatch to pay me a visit. Mr. Day's exterior was not at that time prepossessing, he seldom combed his raven locks, though he was remarkably fond of washing in the stream. We conversed together for several hours on his first visit, and thus began an acquaintance which was I believe of service to us both. To the day of his death, we continued to live in the most intimate and unvarying friendship — a friendship founded upon mutual esteem, between persons of tastes, habits, pursuits, manners, and connexions totally different. A love of knowledge, and a freedom from that admiration of splendour, which dazzles and enslaves mankind, were the only essential points in which we entirely agreed. Mr. Day was grave and of a melancholy temperament; I gay and full of "constitutional joy." Mr. Day was not a man of strong passions, — I was. — Mr. Day was suspicious of the female sex, and averse to risking his happiness for their charms or their society. — To a contrary extreme I was fond of all the happiness which they can bestow. He delighted, even in the company of women, to descant on the evils brought upon mankind by love: he used, after enumerating a long and dismal catalogue, to exclaim with the satiric poet,

> "These, and a thousand more, we find:
> Ah! fear the thousand yet unnam'd behind."

I used to reply with the Anacreontic song,

> " How I baffle human woes,
> Woman, lovely woman knows."

Mr. Day could not refrain from frequently tempting his fate!—and, what was still more extraordinary, he expected that, with a person neither formed by nature, nor cultivated by art, to please, he should win some female wiser than the rest of her sex, who should feel for him the most romantic and everlasting attachment —a paragon, who should forget the follies and vanities of her sex for him; who

> " Should go clad like our maidens in grey,
> And live in a cottage on love."

These hopes and feelings sprang from noble and generous motives. Though armed in adamant against the darts of beauty, and totally insensible to the power of accomplishments, he felt, that for an object, which should resemble the image in his fancy, he could give up fortune, fame, life, every thing but virtue. It is but justice, and not the partiality of friendship, that induces me to assert, that Mr. Day was the most virtuous human being whom I have ever known. During three and twenty years that we lived in the most perfect intimacy, I never knew him swerve from the strictest morality in words or actions. How far beyond the rigid line of duty, his humanity, universal benevolence, and unbounded generosity carried him in his intercourse with mankind, even the unreserved friendship, in which he lived with me or with any other of his friends, could never enable us to estimate. In the course of this narrative many instances of his liberality, and of that highmindedness, which distinguished him from other men, will appear. The true patriotism of Mr. Day's mind, unbiassed by

the love of popularity, or attachment to party, cannot be fully appreciated even by his writings, though every line he wrote breathes the purest love of his country.

After our first meeting, scarcely a day passed whilst I lived at Hare Hatch without our spending several hours together. On literature of all sorts we conversed, but metaphysics in particular became the subject of our consideration. We differed frequently for months, nay even for years, upon various points; but in time we generally came to the same conclusion. I never was acquainted with any man, who in conversation reasoned so profoundly and so logically, or who stated his arguments with so much eloquence, as Mr. Day.

It was a singular trait of character in my wife, who had never shewn any uneasiness at my intimacy with Sir Francis Delaval, that she should take a strong dislike to Mr. Day. A more dangerous and seductive companion than the one, or a more moral and improving companion than the other, could not be found in England. This jealousy of my friend was a subject of great uneasiness to me. My wife was prudent, domestic, and affectionate; but she was not of a cheerful temper. She lamented about trifles; and the lamenting of a female, with whom we live, does not render home delightful. Still I lived more at home than is usual with most men of my age. I did not belong to any club in the neighbourhood; nor did I frequent any assembly, or the yearly races of Reading or Maidenhead, which were within seven or eight miles of me. Except paying one visit to Sir Francis Delaval, three or four short visits to Birmingham and Lichfield, a visit to my father in

Ireland, and the days necessary for keeping terms at the Temple, I never dined or slept from home ten times during five or six years.

Besides my friendship with Mr. Day, I about this time formed an intimacy with Mr. Keir, of Birmingham, a gentleman well known in the literary world. He had served abroad, and had obtained the rank of captain; but, wisely despising the idleness of a soldier's life in time of peace, he sold out of the army at the peace of Fontainbleau, and turned the energy of his powerful mind to science, with a view to make some discovery, by which he might increase his fortune, and in the pursuit of which he might find interesting occupation. I became acquainted with Mr. Keir, at the time when he was employed in translating Macquer's Dictionary of Chemistry, a work which was rendered doubly valuable by the notes of the translator. Mr. Keir accepted an invitation to my house, where he had leisure to pursue his studies during several months. By my means he became acquainted with Mr. Day; and by means of Mr. Keir I became acquainted with Dr. Small, of Birmingham, a man estemed by all who knew him, and by all who were admitted to his friendship beloved with no common enthusiasm. Dr. Small formed a link, which combined Mr. Bolton, Mr. Watt, Dr. Darwin, Mr. Wedgwood, Mr. Day, and myself, together—men of very different characters, but all devoted to literature and science. This mutual intimacy has never been broken but by death; nor have any of the number failed to distinguish themselves in science or literature. Some may think, that I ought with due modesty to except myself.

It is not my object to write the lives of the gentle-

men whom I have named as my particular friends; but I cannot refrain from noticing the great variety of intellect which they possessed. Mr. Keir, with his knowledge of the world, and good sense: Doctor Small, with his benevolence and profound sagacity: Wedgwood, with his unceasing industry, experimental variety, and calm investigation: Bolton, with his mobility, quick perception, and bold adventure: Watt, with his strong inventive faculty, undeviating steadiness, and unbounded resource: Darwin, with his imagination, science, and poetical excellence: and Day, with his unwearied research after truth, his integrity and eloquence:—formed altogether such a society, as few men have had the good fortune to live with; such an assemblage of friends, as fewer still have had the happiness to possess, and keep through life.

At a later period I became acquainted with two friends of Mr. Day's, Mr. Bicknel, and Mr. William Seward, of London. Mr. Seward was prevented by hypochondriacism from much exertion: he however compiled "Biographical Anecdotes" with some reputation. Mr. Bicknel was a man of uncommon abilities. In conjunction with Mr. Day he wrote that beautiful and popular poem, called "*The Dying Negro*," which was published under the name of Mr. Day; nor did I know, till after Mr. Day's death, the precise share which Mr. Bicknel had in this publication. It is always agreeable to learn what parts of any joint literary production belong respectively to each of its authors. I may therefore mention, that in the "Biographical Dictionary" of Dr. Kippis may be found an analysis of this poem, in which those lines which were written by Mr. Bicknel are pointed out,

as they were distinguished in a copy that was in the possession of Mrs. Day.

Mr. Bicknel, besides being a good poet, and a lawyer of the most promising abilities, was a man of nice discrimination, sound judgment, and various conversation. Besides these, whom I may call my intimate friends, I was introduced by Mr. Keir into a society of literary and scientific men, who used formerly to meet once a week at *Jack's* Coffee House, in London, and afterwards at *Young Slaughter's* Coffee House. Without any formal name, this meeting continued for years to be frequented by men of real science, and of distinguished merit. John Hunter was our chairman. Sir Joseph Banks, Solander, Sir C. Blagden, Dr. George Fordyce, Milne, Maskelyne, Captain Cook, Sir G. Shuckburgh, Lord Mulgrave, Smeaton, and Ramsden, were among our numbers. Many other gentlemen of talents belonged to this club, but I mention those only with whom I was individually acquainted. A society of literary men, and a literary society, may be very different. In the one, men give the result of their serious researches, and detail their deliberate thoughts. In the other, the first hints of discoveries, the current observations, and the mutual collision of ideas, are of important utility. The knowledge of each member of such a society becomes in time disseminated among the whole body, and a certain *esprit de corps*, uncontaminated with jealousy, in some degree combines the talents of numbers to forward the views of a single person. I have felt, ever since I belonged to this society, the advantage of its conversation. I am not a freemason; I cannot, therefore, speak of the initiatory trials to which a brother is subjected;

but in the society of Slaughter's Coffee House we practised every means in our power, except personal insult, to try the temper and understanding of each candidate for admission. Every prejudice, which his profession or situation in life might have led him to cherish, was attacked, exposed to argument and ridicule. The argument was always ingenious, and the ridicule sometimes coarse. This ordeal prevented for some time the aspiration of too numerous candidates; but private attachments at length softened the rigour of probation, the society became too numerous, and too *noble*, and was insensibly dissolved.

A singular instance of the advantage, which arises from a free communication of ideas, happened to a medical gentleman, one of our members, who had been called upon to give evidence in a cause of great moment, and the evidence he gave was contrary to the opinion of most gentlemen of his own profession. On the trial of Donellan, who was convicted of having poisoned Sir Theodosius Boughton with laurel-water, the gentleman to whom I allude gave it as his opinion, that such a quantity of this water, as would kill a dog instantly, might be swallowed by a man without any material inconvenience. This assertion was much questioned both at the trial and afterwards. At a meeting of our society, a gentleman attacked it with great vehemence, and he went so far as to say, that the opinion was fabricated for the occasion of the trial of Donellan.

A very unbecoming scene began, which was fortunately interrupted by my calling upon two members of the club to witness, that we had heard the medical gentleman alluded to relate ten years before the trial,

that he had swallowed as much laurel-water as would have killed twenty dogs. I added, that I had seen a dog killed at Dr. Smith's anatomical lectures, at Oxford, by the injection of a single drop of laurel-water. The assailant was quickly put down by my evidence. The simple fact, that the experiment had been made by my medical friend, and communicated to a literary society, many years previous to Donellan's trial, proving, that it could not have been fabricated *for the occasion.*

I have mentioned that Ramsden, the celebrated optician, was of our society. Besides his great mechanical genius, he had a species of invention not quite so creditable, the invention of excuses. He never kept an engagement of any sort, never finished any work punctually, or ever failed to promise what he always failed to perform.

The king (George III.) had bespoke an instrument, which he was peculiarly desirous to obtain; he had allowed Ramsden to name his own time, but, as usual, the work was scarcely begun at the period appointed for delivery; however, when at last, it was finished, he took it down to Kew in a postchaise, in a prodigious hurry; and, driving up to the palace gate, he asked if *His Majesty was at home.* The pages and attendants in waiting expressed their surprise at such a visit: he however pertinaciously insisted upon being admitted, assuring the page, that, if he told the king that Ramsden was at the gate, His Majesty would soon shew that he would be glad to see him. He was right, he was let in, and was graciously received. His Majesty, after examining the instrument carefully, of which he was really a judge, expressed his satisfaction, and turning gravely to

Ramsden, paid him some compliment upon his punctuality.

"I have been told, Mr. Ramsden," said the King, "that you are considered to be the least punctual of any man in England; you have brought home this instrument on the very *day* that was appointed. You have only mistaken the *year!*"

CHAPTER VIII.

In the spring of 1768, my friend Mr. Day accompanied me to Ireland, on a visit to my father. I took my son with me, leaving my wife and an infant daughter in England. We travelled in my phaeton, and with my own horses, but without a servant. To amuse ourselves on our journey, we agreed that Mr. Day should pass for a very *odd* gentleman, who was travelling about the world to overcome his sorrow for the loss of his wife; he was to be dotingly fond of his son, who was to be a most extraordinary child. We settled that I should pass for his servant and factotum; that whilst I behaved with the utmost civility and attention towards my master, I should behind his back represent him as a humorist and a misanthropist; and that while he appeared civil, and easily pleased with common fare and ordinary attendance, I should give myself all possible airs. We put our plan in execution at Eccleshall, in Staffordshire. I drove my indolent master with great eclat up to the inn, which stands, or stood, in a broad street. My carriage had a contrivance for letting off the horses instantaneously. As soon as I came to the door, I disengaged the horses in a moment, before the hostler, for whom I vociferated with uncommon energy, could obey my summons. A number of people collected about us, who gazed at Mr. Day and the child, sitting

composedly in the open carriage without horses. I got out, and with my hat off, lifted out little master, and held my arm for my great master, who descended with much deliberation. When they had been shewn into a parlour, I went into the kitchen to order dinner. The landlady was going up to ask what the gentleman would please to have; but I stopped her, and begged that she would save herself the trouble, as I always ordered every thing. I then bespoke some cold meat for my master, and a tart for the child, and with an air of authority desired to see the larder, that I might order dinner for *myself*. Mrs. Landlady, as she did not live on one of the great roads near London, seemed somewhat surprised at my assurance. Having made my way to the larder, I ordered every thing that appeared delicate or costly in the house. I now went into the street, examining the carriage, sending the hostler one way and Boots another.

My son, who, though very young, entered into the joke, was looking out of the dining-room window; and, desirous of playing some part in the drama, he came down to me, climbed up into the phaeton, and then jumped out into my arms from a considerable distance. He performed various other feats of activity, and these, with his dress, attracted the notice of those inhabitants of the town who had collected near the inn; they began to talk to the boy and to me with eager curiosity. I diverted them exceedingly with an account of Mr. Day's misanthrophy, and with his various adventures by sea and land; and thus I contrived to fix their attention till dinner-time approached. My master then called for the child, and I carried him in with the utmost haste, and with the most obsequious manner. My master's plain fare was

ready, and my delicate dinner was preparing with the utmost nicety in the kitchen, where I condescended to direct the cook, when on a sudden I was accosted by my name in a well known voice. I turned, and beheld Doctor Darwin, whom I little expected to meet at this distance from his home, and travelling a road unusual to him. The landlady cast a reproachful look upon me, but, notwithstanding her evident surprise, wanted to persuade us, that she had not been *taken in from the beginning*. "Ah! Doctor," said she, "this gentleman wanted to pass himself upon me for a servant, but I suspected him, notwithstanding all his pretensions. He has ordered every thing good in the house, and I hope he will share his dinner with his friends, who have acknowledged him in his low estate."

Mr. Whitehurst* was with Doctor Darwin, and we joined company. Thus began my acquaintance with one of the most simple, unassuming philosophers I have ever known, and thus I had an opportunity of introducing Mr. Day to Doctor Darwin. Their acquaintance did not however this day commence under the most favorable auspices; for as Mr. Day had no taste for mechanicks, he did not join in our conversation for several hours, during which time Doctor Darwin of course took him to be just such a person in reality, as I had represented him to our landlady. Some topic however arose before we parted, on which Mr. Day displayed so much knowledge, feeling, and eloquence, as to captivate the Doctor entirely. He invited Mr. Day to Lichfield, an invitation which led not only to intimacy, but to a very sincere friendship.

* Author of a "*Theory of the Earth*," &c.

After our departure from Eccleshall, Mr. Day and I proceeded without any adventures on our journey to Ireland, and arrived in Dublin. This city was at that time so very different from what it now is, and from what London then was, that it struck Mr. Day with surprise and disgust. The streets were wretchedly paved, and more dirty than can be easily imagined. The poor were squalid, and their tones strangely discordant to an English ear. The hackney coaches, their horses, and still more their drivers, were so far below what were to be seen in London, and were altogether so uncouth, as to increase at every fresh view the astonishment of my friend. As we passed through the country, the hovels in which the poor were lodged, which were then far more wretched than they are at present, or than they have been for the last twenty years, the black tracts of bog, and the unusual smell of the turf fuel, were to him never-ceasing topics of reproach or lamentation. Mr. Day's deep-seated prejudice in favor of savage life was somewhat shaken by this view of want and misery, which philosophers of a certain class in London and Paris chose at that time to dignify by the name of simplicity. The modes of living in the houses of the gentry were much the same in Ireland as in England. This surprised my friend: he observed, that, if there was any difference, it was that people of similar fortune did not restrain themselves equally in both countries to the same prudent economy; but that every gentleman in Ireland, of two or three thousand pounds a year, lived in a certain degree of luxury and show, that would be thought presumptuous in persons of the same fortune in England.

On our journey to my father's house, I had occasion to vote at a contested election in one of the counties through which we passed. Here a scene of noise, riot, confusion, and drunkenness was exhibited, not superior indeed as to depravity and folly, but of a character or manner so different from what my friend had ever seen in his own country, that he fell into a profound melancholy. No beds were to be had at the inn, or stabling for my horses; but if we and they could have eaten beef and drunk claret in the streets, we might have had as much, or ten times as much, as we could have swallowed. The gentleman, for whom I intended to vote, at length billetted me at a clergyman's house near the town, where we were most comfortably taken care of. The next morning I went early to the hustings, that I might give my vote, and proceed without delay upon my journey; I was the first person who offered himself to be polled. None of the candidates knew me; and the sheriff, to whom also I was a stranger, inquired from the lawyers and from those near him, who I was; but could not discover. A law had been just made to expedite elections by prohibiting the examination of voters as to their freeholds; and the sheriff was obliged at his peril to receive every vote that was sanctioned by the oath of the voter. This law had not yet been enforced at any election, and I was determined to exercise my steadiness, by adhering strictly to the letter of the Act of Parliament, which I had in my pocket. I accordingly presented myself to the sheriff with a tender of my vote. He asked me various questions, which I thought irrelevant; but which the lawyers on all sides, for there were four candidates, insisted I should answer. —

I refused—and, producing the act, asserted my right of voting, upon making the affidavit therein specified. The sheriff began to hesitate; the lawyers began to fear, that a rule might be made relative to the future proceedings, which might injure their importance; and in consequence I was actually admitted to vote without giving any explanations. By this time my friend, the father of one of the candidates, came upon the hustings, and told the sheriff, that he knew I had an estate worth some hundreds a year in his county. The lawyers laughed, and I laughed along with them, and retired well satisfied with this essay of my firmness among numbers.

In these countries it is essential to a man of abilities, to be able to think and speak in public assemblies. Yet we often see, that men who can fight, and who in private are rather impudent than modest, frequently find, that their presence of mind forsakes them when they are to speak or decide before numbers. Habit sometimes renders this disposition so unconquerable, that men of experience and of great talents feel themselves panic struck in public assemblies, if they attempt to deliver their sentiments.

Mr. Day and I proceeded to Edgeworth-Town, where my father and sister resided. To my father, Mr. Day appeared a very singular personage. My father had not been used to think, that a man without certain conventional manners could be entitled to much consideration; and though he could not avoid being struck by Mr. Day's conversation, and by his strong powers of reasoning, yet my father conceived a violent prejudice against him, in consequence of something in his manner of eating and sitting at table, which appeared unsuitable to his rank in life. Mr. Day on his side

smiled with philosophic indifference at these prejudices in favor of politeness, and seemed to undervalue the understanding of him who set such high importance upon external appearance. My sister, who was not less imbued than my father with a prepossession in favor of good breeding, stood aloof; while my friend preserved an awful distance from a woman, whom he was inclined to consider as a confirmed fine lady, a sort of being for which he had a feeling of something like horror. My sister's easy manners, and agreeable conversation, in a few weeks began nevertheless to unbend the stubbornness of Mr. Day's stoicism. She perceived his excellent sense, and humane and generous disposition, and I perceived that they were disposed to approach. The lady however could not be reasoned out of her aristocratic habits, which she defended with so much wit and vivacity, that in company she had always the advantage; but when I was the only auditor, Mr. Day's eloquence prevailed. My sister had a taste for the beauties of nature, for literature, and for good conversation; she was far from being deficient in information on those subjects which had engaged his attention, and there were some points on which they had similar sentiments.

Before three months were at an end, Mr. Day became her avowed admirer, and my sister was prevailed upon to acknowledge, that, if the gentleman continued for a year in the same mind, and could in that time make his appearance becoming a man of his situation in life, she might be induced to give him her hand. I was commissioned to speak to my father. He could make no objection to Mr. Day's morals or fortune; but he could not repress his

astonishment at his daughter's descent from the aristocratic heights, to which she had been accustomed.

My friend and I quitted Ireland in autumn, and returned to Hare Hatch. I left my sister studying metaphysics, which Mr. Day had recommended to her; and he, in hopes of pleasing her, went to London to study the graces. I believe that about this time Mr. Day entered the Temple; but I do not distinctly recollect the order of the unimportant events, which passed during the year 1769. For my own part I made several excursions to Lichfield and Birmingham, to visit my friends Dr. Small, Mr. Keir, and Dr. Darwin. I eagerly cultivated their society, and I amused myself with mechanicks, but I fear that I did not add much to my stock of literature.

In one of my journeys from Hare Hatch to Birmingham, I accidentally met with a person, whom I as a mechanick had a curiosity to see. This was a sailor, who had amused London with a singular exhibition of dexterity. He was called *Jack the Darter*. He threw his darts, which consisted of thin rods of deal, of about half an inch in diameter, and of a yard long, to an amazing height and distance; for instance, he threw them over what was then called the New Church in the Strand. Of this feat I had heard, but I entertained some doubts upon the subject; I had inquired from my friends where this man could be found, but had not been able to discover him. As I was driving towards Birmingham in an open carriage of a singular construction, I overtook a man, who walked remarkably fast, but who stopped as I passed him, and eyed my equipage with uncommon curiosity. There was something in his manner, that made me speak to him; and, from the sort of questions he

asked about my carriage, I found that he was a clever fellow. I soon learned, that he had walked over the greatest part of England, and that he was perfectly acquainted with London. It came into my head to inquire, whether he had ever seen the exhibition, about which I was so desirous to be informed.

" Lord! Sir," said he, " I am, myself, Jack the Darter." He had a roll of brown paper in his hand, which he unfolded, and soon produced a bundle of the light deal sticks, which he had the power of darting to such a distance. He readily consented to gratify my curiosity, and after he had thrown some of them to a prodigious height, I asked him to throw some of them horizontally. At the first trial he threw one of them eighty yards with great ease. I observed, that he coiled a small string round the stick, by which he gave it a rotary motion, that preserved it from altering its course; and at the same time it allowed the arm, which threw it, time to exercise its whole force.

If any thing be simply thrown from the hand, it is clear, that it can acquire no greater velocity than that of the hand which throws it: but if the body that is thrown, passes through a greater space than the hand, whilst the hand continues to communicate motion to the body to be impelled, the body will acquire a velocity nearly double to that of the hand which throws it. The ancients were aware of this, and they wrapped a thong of leather round their javelins, by which they could throw them with additional violence. This invention did not, I believe, belong to the Greeks; nor do I remember its being mentioned by Homer or Xenophon. It was in use among the Romans; but at what time it was intro-

duced or laid aside I know not. Whoever is acquainted with the science of projectiles will perceive, that this invention is well worthy of their attention.

After having satisfied my curiosity about Jack the Darter, I proceeded to Birmingham. I mentioned, that I travelled in a carriage of a singular construction. It was a one-wheeled chaise, which I had had made for the purpose of going conveniently in narrow roads. It was made fast by shafts to the horse's sides, and was furnished with two weights or counterpoises, that hung below the shafts. The seat was not more than eight and twenty or thirty inches from the ground, in order to bring the centre of gravity of the whole as low as possible. The foot-board turned upon hinges, fastened to the shafts, so that when it met with any obstacle it gave way, and my legs were warned to lift themselves up. In going through water my legs were secured by leathers, which folded up like the sides of bellows; by this means I was pretty safe from wet. On my road to Birmingham I passed through Long-Compton, in Warwickshire, on a Sunday. The people were returning from church, and numbers stopped to gaze at me. There is or was a shallow ford near the town, over which there was a very narrow bridge for horse and foot passengers, but not sufficiently wide for waggons or chaises. Towards this bridge I drove. The people, not perceiving the structure of my one-wheeled vehicle, called to me with great eagerness to warn me, that the bridge was too narrow for carriages. I had an excellent horse, which went so fast as to give but little time for examination. The louder they called, the faster I drove, and when I had passed the bridge, they shouted after me with surprise. I got on to Shipston

upon Stour; but, before I had dined there, I found that my fame had overtaken me. My carriage was put into a coach-house, so that those who came from Long-Compton, not seeing it, did not recognise me; I therefore had an opportunity of hearing all the exaggerations and strange conjectures, which were made by those who related my passage over the narrow bridge. There were posts on the bridge, to prevent, as I suppose, more than one horseman from passing at once. Some of the spectators asserted, that my carriage had gone over these posts; others said that it had not *wheels*, which was indeed literally true; but they meant to say that it was without any wheel. Some were sure that no carriage ever went so fast; and all agreed, that at the end of the bridge, where the floods had laid the road for some way under water, my carriage swam on the surface of the water.

This year when I went to London to keep my last terms, I made a first attempt to speak in a public assembly. My friend Mr. Day had about this time made a speech to the Westminster electors, which had been much applauded. He and our common friend Mr. Bicknel were in town living together; as we were going home one night through the streets of London, Mr. Bicknel expressed much surprise at Mr. Day's being able to face such a multitude, as that which he had encountered on the hustings; and was astonished, that he could speak with tolerable facility even an harangue which had been prepared at leisure. I affirmed, that a man, who had always been used to express himself in good language, could not be much at a loss in speaking upon any common subject in public; I said that the magick of numbers, like all other magick, ceased to have power the

moment when its influence was discredited. "But do you think," said Mr. Bicknel, "that you could get up, without previous preparation, on any given common subject, and speak before a great number of people?" I answered in the affirmative: and I said, that, supposing it was a subject with which I was tolerably well acquainted, I would undertake to make the audience laugh at me, hiss me, and applaud me.

"You may try now," said Mr. Bicknel, "for we are within fifty yards of Coachmakers' hall, where a debating society is at this moment in full assembly." I determined to make the trial. We found the room extremely crowded, not indeed with a very brilliant assembly; but still a crowd is a crowd. The subject under consideration was the influence of female manners upon society. The moment that the speaker on his legs had finished, I rose, and, catching the president's eye, I began, as soon as silence permitted me, to address him thus, stammering at every syllable, "Mr. Pr—— Pr—— Pr—— Mr. Pre—— Pre—— Pre—— Pres—— President,"—stuttering with prodigious violence. Voices on every side expressed wonder at the folly of a man's attempting to speak in public, who must be, or ought to be, conscious, that he could not speak articulately in private. After a few moments of compassion, the ridicule of the spectacle which I afforded struck the assembly with one common consent, and a universal laugh shook the hall. When it began to subside, I appeared to recover myself by degrees, and then, in fluent language, I descanted upon the follies of fashion, and upon the sacrifices made to its despotick power by the fair sex. I observed, that my audience was principally composed of ordinary mechanicks, shoemakers and

staymakers in particular. The gallery was full of females, and before such an audience my second undertaking was not very difficult to be accomplished. I inveighed with great vehemence against the indecency with which ladies sometimes submitted their persons to the familiar touch of rude mechanicks; I described a delicate lady holding out her leg and foot to a shoemaker: I marked the contrast between his black hands and leathern smell, and the white silken foot and perfumed odour of a modern belle: I decribed, perhaps too accurately, the operations of an Italian staymaker. This was at a time when stays of a peculiar kind were in fashion. My audience began to murmur, and as I proceeded, their feelings broke out into the the strongest marks of indignation. I was hissed, and nearly put down. I however kept my countenance, and gradually receding from the tone I had taken, I pronounced a panegyric upon women, on their beauty, modesty, prudence, and unlimited sway over our sex. The ladies in the gallery got up, leaned over the railing, and shewed by their attention and their smiles, that I had obtained their approbation. The president's hammer stood suspended, whilst I proceeded in this strain, till by abusing all foreigners, and praising every thing that was English, I obtained unbounded applause from the whole audience. I never returned to this nursery of eloquence: but I am satisfied, that this trial of myself gave me confidence, when I had occasion many years afterwards to address a public assembly.

It is useful to men to try their powers, but teaching boys to declaim is in general hurtful; as it gives them a pedantic air, and inclines them to think, that, so long as they can go on with fluency, and in

language tolerably appropriate, they are *speaking well.* This treacherous facility prevents them from perceiving, that their knowledge is superficial; and they never suspect the inevitable truth, that they must be neglected, unless they have something useful to communicate.

Before the winter of the year in which they parted had elapsed, Mr. Day and my sister discovered, what all their friends had seen from the beginning of their acquaintance, that they were not suited to each other. Fortunately this discovery was made, before my friend had become so far attached, as to render my sister's final decision a source of deep, or at least of permanent regret. Mr. Day suffered indeed at the time, but his heart and his pride soon recovered, and he determined to put in practice a scheme, which had long occupied his imagination. This was no common project, but a design more romantic than any which we find in novels.

Mr. Day resolved to breed up two girls, as equally as possible, under his own eye; hoping that they might be companions to each other while they were children, and that, before they grew up to be women, he might be able to decide, which of them would be most agreeable to himself for a wife. I was not with my friend when he and Mr. Bicknel selected from a number of orphans*, one of remarkably promising appearance. It was necessary, that the girl should be bound apprentice to some *married* man. I was the person, whom Mr. Day named, and to me Sabrina Sidney was apprenticed. Mr. Day called her Sabrina from the River Severn, and Sidney from his favorite,

* See Mr. Keir's Life of Day.

Algernon Sidney. On his return to London, he presented to me the little ward, who had been thus bound to me without my knowledge. I had such well merited confidence in Mr. Day, that I felt no repugnance against his being entrusted with the care of a girl, who had been thus put incidentally under my protection. In a few days he went to the Foundling Hospital, in London, and chose another girl, to whom he gave the name of Lucretia. He placed his wards in a widow's house, in some court near Chancery Lane, and immediately applied himself to their education. They were eleven and twelve years old, good humoured and welldisposed. Mr. Day's kindness soon made them willing to conduct themselves according to his directions. But a lodging in London was not a convenient or an agreeable scene, for such a plan as he intended to pursue; he therefore determined to take his pupils out of England, that he might avoid the inquiries and curiosity of his acquaintance. He accordingly removed from London, and shortly afterwards he sailed to France. I do not remember many of the circumstances of this journey. I know only, that he resided a considerable time at Avignon, where he excited much surprise by his mode of life, and by his opinions. But his simplicity of conduct, strict morality, uncommon generosity, and excellent understanding, soon removed these impressions: and both he and his pupils were treated with kindness and civility by the principal people in Avignon.

Mr. Day had as large a portion of national prejudice in favor of the people of England, and against the French, as any man of sense could have; it was therefore something strange, that he should take two

young girls to that country, one of whom he destined to be his wife; but, upon reflection, it appears, that Mr. Day had a considerable advantage in being in this situation. From their total ignorance of the French language, an ignorance which he took no pains to remove, his pupils were not exposed to any impertinent interference; and as that knowledge of the world, from which he wished to preserve them, was at one entrance quite shut out, he had their minds entirely open to such ideas and sentiments, and such only, as he desired to implant. Mr. Day had an unconquerable horror of the empire of fashion over the minds of women; simplicity, perfect innocence, and attachment to himself, were at that time the only qualifications which he desired in a wife. He was not perhaps sufficiently aware, that ignorance is not necessary to preserve innocence: for this reason he was not anxious to cultivate the understandings of his pupils. He taught them by slow degrees to read and write; by continually talking to them, by reasoning, which appeared to me above their comprehension, and by ridicule, the taste for which might afterwards be turned against himself, he endeavoured to imbue them with a deep hatred for dress, and luxury, and fine people, and fashion, and titles. At his return to England, which happened, I believe, when I was out of that country, he parted with one of his pupils, finding her invincibly stupid, or at the best not disposed to follow his regimen. He gave her three or four hundred pounds, which soon procured her a husband, who was a small shopkeeper. In this situation she went on contentedly, was happy, and made her husband happy, and is, perhaps, at this moment, comfortably seated with some of her grandchildren on her

knees. His other pupil, Sabrina Sidney, was, at Mr. Day's return from France, a very pleasing girl of thirteen. Her countenance was engaging. She had fine auburn hair, that hung in natural ringlets on her neck; a beauty, which was then more striking, because other people wore enormous quantities of powder and pomatum. Her long eye-lashes, and eyes expressive of sweetness, interested all who saw her, and the uncommon melody of her voice made a favorable impression upon every person to whom she spoke. I was curious to see how my friend's philosophic romance would end.

Note by the Editor.

Two of Mr. Day's letters from Avignon, written when he was scarcely twenty, may, perhaps, amuse the reader. His expressions of contempt and horror of French society must not be taken literally or seriously. Mr. Day did not understand French sufficiently at this time, to judge of foreign conversation. His exaggerated opinion of Rousseau was recanted, as will appear by one of his letters after he attained to years of discretion. The following are given merely as specimens of his early style, and as almost the only instances of gaiety of manner, which ever appeared in his correspondence.

Avignon, November, 1769.

Behold me at Avignon, full six hundred and fifty miles, three quarters, and one furlong, from Barehill, N. B. by the well known rules of addition and subtraction, you may by this means calculate my distance from London, Reading, &c.) and yet, by heavens! I am alive! and what is more, tolerably well; *vivit?—imo vero etiam in senatum venit!* Were I to relate the stagecoaches I have travelled in, the post-boys I have talked big to, (nay, I have gone so far as to say *sacre Dieu!*) the inns I have lain at, the rivers I have passed, with no more than a three-quarters of an inch plank between me and destruction, I should make you shudder! Happy, *O terque quaterque beate,* are you whom fate permits to lead an

easy, safe, and inglorious life, far from the toils, the dangers, of us who travel to see the wonders of the world. Thus much I thought proper to observe *en passant.*

And yet, my friend, Providence, that impartial distributor of good and evil, to every station of life allots its peculiar pleasures, as well as its peculiar pains. Had I staid at home, perhaps at this moment I might be in a warm comfortable room, calculating the vibrations of your wooden horse's legs; but should I, my friend, should I have been what I now am,—the traveller, the polite scholar, and the fine gentleman? Should I have worn a laced coat? Should I have seen a governor, or an intendant, or who knows what is yet reserved for me by destiny.

Seriously—It is seldom that we are enabled with impartiality to estimate either the advantages or the disadvantages of our own situation, relative to that of other nations, or other individuals. Were you to believe some of our travellers, to find a sample of hell you must travel in France—bad roads, carriages, provisions, beds, and every other inconvenience which a man can bear and live: were you to believe others, there is no misery except in England, no happiness but in France. Heaven and hell separated by an extent of sea scarcely seven leagues. The first you always laughed at, and with reason: the second, perhaps, you may still believe. To destroy your prejudices against your own country and its inhabitants, and to convince you, that your own literature is by much the most eligible, cannot, I think, be doing you any considerable harm. Me, perhaps, you may believe, or rather believe my writings, my sentiments, if you find a spirit of moderation and candour, without bitterness and without violence.

There is indubitably among the French a greater spirit of dissipation than among the English: they are accustomed to no kind of employment, to no kind of attention; their mornings are spent in dress and in sauntering about, and their afternoons in visits. If true happiness consists in perfect vacuity, they certainly have the advantage of us. I have been introduced into all the polite assemblies—I know something of their manner of life, at least the outward and visible signs. In their visiting rooms you see a number of beings lolling, walking, standing, yawning, talking of the same trifling subjects, which you would hear discussed in England with the same indifference, till the happy moment arrives, which sets them down to the gaming table; I know not that the French are more indifferent to the loss of their money, or less agitated by the common passions which attend the gaming

table than the English ; if they are, I am sure the countenance is no index to the heart. I should be sorry if our Creator had made our happiness depend upon the gaming table. Indeed the rest of mankind would have some cause to complain as well as myself, if this had been so ordained. If you go into their coffee-houses you find a number of idle people playing at dice, sitting round a stove doing nothing, gaping, yawning, getting up, and sitting down again. There is another species of pleasure in France, which consists in intrigue * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * Were I to wander like Cain over the face of the earth, there is no doubt but I should prefer France, since it is so much easier for a stranger to get into society here, than in England; there is also no manner of doubt, but that there is a more general spirit of politeness among the French than among us, that is, a man runs less hazard of being affronted, or meeting with any kind of incivility or positive rudeness ; no wonder, for the consequence is death, or infamy, both to the aggressor and the injured ; but were I to settle, I think no man of common sense would hesitate a moment between the two countries ; in England one enjoys all the comforts, all the real advantages, all the connexions of life, let me add all the conveniences, to a much greater advantage than here.

I am settled *chez M. Fréderic, vis à vis la Madeleine, Avignon.* I hope you will write to me as soon as you can: in your letter let me hear of nothing but your boy, your wooden horse, and other domestic occurrences—to me they will be the most agreeable subjects in nature. Every thing belonging to me goes on well, give my love to Dick, and my best respects to your wife. Have you got a house yet?—have you got a patent?—a title?—a fortune?—a child?—a medal?—a new chaise?

Vale,

Thomas Day.

1769.

I had thought it impossible, that any thing should so far overcome the aversion you entertain to letters, as to make you write a whole sheet of foolscap, and, what is more, in a legible hand. I began to doubt, whether you had not been guilty of plagiary, and bribed some fair lady; as the booksellers paid Dryden to compose so many sheets a winter. I am, however, much obliged by your having made the exception in my favor. When every boarding-school Miss can consume whole reams without a single

sentiment or idea to express, it would be disgraceful if two philosophers, and, what is more, two real friends, should be unable to fill a sheet of paper once in six weeks, more especially when we are separated by such a tract of country.

Οὖρεά τε σκιόεντα, θάλασσά τε ἠχήεσσα.

Accept a miracle instead of wit,
A line of Homer in Greek letters writ.

That gaiety, my friend, which you remark in my letter, is neither an effect of French, nor of the recovery of my health: it is an effect of either a constitutional philosophy, or of habit to make a jest, at least to others, of what is most disagreeable to me. For be assured no one circumstance of life was ever half so much so, as my residence in France. Dr. Small was little acquainted either with me or the French, when he advised me to a change of climate for the sake of engaging and amusing my mind; instead of giving myself up more to dissipation, I really assure you, I never read or thought more in my whole life, than I do at present.

Consider from how many subjects of English conversation the French are entirely excluded. Politics, that polite source of dispute with us, is with them unknown; with agriculture, which employs so much of the attention of our country gentlemen, they never meddle: add to this the disadvantage of their climate, which, being almost constantly serene, gives them no employment in remarking its variations. Whether it is the effect of custom, prejudice, or both together, I know not, but I begin to regret the fogs and showers of Old England. Nothing can be more ignorant than those of the French nobility whom I have seen; so far from finding any taste for any kind of science among them I really have not heard enough in any company in France to persuade me, that any one person who composed it could even read. Upon the whole I conclude, from all I see, and from all I hear, that the general taste for foreign countries, and contempt for their own, so prevalent amongst the English, can proceed from no other principle, than that perversion which makes women prefer lap-dogs to their children, or which makes our sex prefer the company of profligate to modest women, and every species of vice and folly to the more easy dictates of common sense. It is possible that, deceived by my own prejudices and attachments to men, to places, to opinions, I may judge erroneously; it is

your business to inform yourself of the truth of facts, and then to deduce your own conclusions. Attached entirely to exteriors, enslaved by their king and by women, manliness of sentiment and strength of reason appear to be entirely unknown in this country; to dress, to dance, to sing, to "tend the Fair," are the occupations of a Frenchman's life; their prejudices, which make them consider their inferiors less as men than beasts of burthen, make them entirely indifferent to their wants, their miseries; a profusion in dress, in equipage, usurps the place of love and of generosity. The women, brought up in convents, or formed under the care of gouvernantes and servants, when they enter into the world, bring prejudice, extravagance, and coquetry to their husbands: no laws, nor the force of the religion they are bigoted to, can restrain them; the feeble ties of modesty, decorum, or shame, are unknown—a universal infidelity prevails; the men can feel nothing but indifference for their nominal wives; hence all the ties of nature are broken through, all the sweet connexions of domestic life unknown—husband, wife, father, son, and brother, are words without meaning, *Vox et præterea nihil.* But the most disgusting sight of all is to see that sex, whose weakness of body, and imbecility of mind, can only entitle them to our compassion and indulgence, assuming an unnatural dominion, and regulating the customs, the manners, the lives and opinions of the other sex, by their own caprices, weakness, and ignorance.

But after all, I think it will be of some advantage to me to have been in France: I flatter myself, that by going into company here, and a little observation, I have so well matured the instructions I received first from you, that I shall have upon my return (or at least know how to assume) sufficient impertinence, loquacity, vanity, and fine clothes, to set up with some degree of success for the character of a *polite* man. Apropos I have bought a fine gold waistcoat for you, but I am apprehensive of its being seized when I come back, therefore I should be glad if you would take the trouble of inquiring, and write me word in your next letter, what are the laws in that respect.

You inquire after my pupils: I am not disappointed in any one respect. I am more attached to, and more convinced of the truths of my principles than ever. I am very sure the company of these children has preserved me from a great many melancholy hours. I have made them, in respect to temper, two such girls, as, I may perhaps say without vanity, you have never seen at the same age. They have never given me a moment's trouble throughout

the voyage, are always contented, and think nothing so agreeable as waiting upon me (no moderate convenience for a lazy man): perhaps it may divert you to see an original letter from Miss Sabrina Sidney, word for word dictated by herself:—"Dear Mr. Edgeworth, I am glad to hear you are well, and your little boy—I love Mr. Day dearly, and Lucretia—I am learning to write—I do not like France so well as England—the people are very brown, they dress very oddly—the climate is very good here. I hope I shall have more sense *against* I come to England—I know how to make a circle and an *equilateral* triangle—I know the cause of night and day, winter and summer. I love Mr. Day best in the world, Mr. Bicknel next, and you next."—All this is, I believe, a faithful display of her heart and head.

I can't say I find any benefit from the change of climate, I think I am just the same, *Levius fit patientia quicquid corrigere est nefas.* I know of no consolations we can derive from philosophy against the absolute power of disease. This simple sentiment supports me, That we must all yield to necessity, and, while we live, the less we employ our minds upon our own infirmities, the easier we shall be. When we have lost both the hope of cure and happiness, *Die soon, oh, Fairy's son!* I have allotted myself a kind of task in life, till the performance of which, without the last necessity, I will not retire to rest. After all, there is so little certainty in human affairs, so small an interval between good and evil, happiness and misery, so much, and such unexpected misery amongst mankind, that no one, who considers, will suffer himself to be strongly attached to life. You and I agree perfectly in our fundamental principles. Health of body and employment—moderation of the passions—agreeable society and good temper, *hoc satis est donasse Jovem.* Were all the books in the world to be destroyed, except scientific books (which I except, not to affront you) the second book I should wish to save, after the Bible, would be Rousseau's Emilius. It is indeed a most extraordinary work—the more I read, the more I admire—Rousseau alone, with a perspicuity more than mortal, has been able at once to look through the human heart, and discover the secret sources and combinations of the passions. Every page is big with important truth. In respect to your child, I know of only one danger, which is, that you may enlarge his ideas too fast. To yield without murmuring to necessity, to exert properly the faculties of nature, to be unbiassed by prejudice, are the simple foundations of every thing that is great, good, sublime—"Excellent Rousseau!" first

of humankind! Behold a system, which, preserving to man all the faculties, and the excellencies, and the liberty of his nature, preserves a *medium* between the brutality and ignorance of a savage, and the corruptions of society! Remember, it will never be too late to enlighten the understanding; but that a single error, like a drop of poison, contaminates the whole. Never trouble yourself about Dick's reading and writing, he will learn it, sooner or later, if you let him alone; and there is no danger, except that the people of Henley may call him a dunce.

Do not be surprised at the enormous length of this letter, or think I expect as much in return: when we exchange ore for metal, he is not always a loser, who receives the least in weight.

Faites mes complimens à Madame votre femme—Mademoiselle votre sœur, &c.

Oh, my dear friend, you'd be quite surprised to see me now: Oh Lord! I am quite another thing to what I was—I *talks* French like any thing; I wears a velvet coat, and a fine waistcoat, all over gold, and dresses quite *comme il faut:* and trips about with my hat under my arm, and "*Serviteur Monsieur!*" and "*J'ai l'honneur Madame,*" &c. Oh dear, it's charming upon my soul!—good night—my paper's out, and I must *dress for the concert.* I pity you poor country puts, that see nothing of the world, and, when I return, will try to teach you how to behave.

THOMAS DAY.

CHAPTER IX.

[1769–70.

Before Mr. Day returned from France, and whilst I was still living at Hare Hatch, I received an account, that my father was dangerously ill; I immediately set off for Ireland, and found him in Dublin, suffering under the hands of surgeons, from the effects of a slight cut in one of his toes; he languished for three or four months, bore his illness with resignation to the will of Providence, and died with firm hope of happiness in Heaven. My father, (Richard Edgeworth), was in his seventieth year when he died. He had always set an example to his children of perfect morality, and of unaffected piety. Upright, honourable, sincere, and sweet tempered, he was loved and respected by people of all ranks, with whom he was connected. He was in the Irish parliament for five and twenty years, and I have reason to believe, that he never gave a vote contrary to his conviction; an instance of virtue, in those days, not very common. That he was in a few instances persuaded by his friends, that what was for their interest was for the interest of the state, might, I believe, be the case; but no corrupt motive could be even suspected, for he never had, during his whole life, any pension or emolument; nor do I know of the smallest favour that he ever received for any person

from government, though he generally voted with what was called the court. He was twice offered, but he declined accepting a baronetage, to which he had a claim as ancient as the time of James the First, when a patent was prepared for his great grandfather, Francis Edgeworth, who was then clerk of the Hanaper.

My father's understanding was sound and clear, and he was reputed to be a good chamber-council; but his health, or his inclination did not accord with the laborious practice of his profession; he had retired, soon after his marriage, to the country, and applied himself, by the care and management of his estate, to provide for his family. Early difficulties had accustomed him to laborious business at the desk, and to uncommon accuracy. These habits continued to influence him during his whole life, so much, that in the course of his business he used to give and take a receipt for sums even under a pound, at full legal length; and, to avoid future disputes, he wrote the day of the month and the year of our Lord in letters. This was pure habit and not weakness of mind; it is mentioned here, among many instances I have adduced to point out the force of early education.

After my father's death, finding myself in possession of an estate which rendered it no longer necessary for me to pursue my profession as a barrister, I was not called to the bar, though I had completed all my terms. I was not anxious to obtain wealth, nor was I ambitious, therefore I had no motive to excite me to pursue a laborious profession, that did not suit my taste, which was for domestic life and scientific pursuits.

It had been my father's hope, in educating me for

the law, that I should distinguish myself in a profession, for which he had a singular veneration. Had he perfectly understood my disposition, he might easily have led me to pursue the course, which he ardently desired. But notwithstanding his having the kindest intentions, he made some mistakes in the management of my mind. Seeing that I was of a lively disposition, he concluded that I must be averse to the study of the law, and he fancied that my love for what is commonly called *pleasure* would necessarily prevent me from all serious application. In guarding against this, and in haste to make a lawyer of me, he at my first going to Oxford, in spite of the honourable warning he had received, put me under the care of his friend Mr. Elers. In his house, it is true, I was free from the common excitements to dissipation; but I was there, in my first vacations, secluded from the world, and exposed to a temptation, which to my inexperienced youth, and naturally strong passions, proved irresistible. Had not my father been prepossessed by the idea of my volatility, and had he placed me in situations where my ambition might have been early excited, he would probably have succeeded in his views. It was at that time easy in Ireland, for a young barrister of any talents, and whose family had some influence in their own county, to make way into the Irish parliament. Had parliamentary eminence been held up to me, I should probably have studied hard, to enable myself to follow public business. My father might have encouraged me by pointing out, that I was not entirely deficient in the qualities necessary for a public speaker: I had been always accustomed in my own family to hear good language; I had been in the

habit of paying attention to my own manner of speaking; I had read a number of good English authors, and had an ardent taste for the acquisition of knowledge, with a desire to excel, which might have been directed into any path of what is commonly called ambition.

I here simply point out what means would, I believe, have succeeded in securing the objects for me, which my father wished; whether, if I had followed public business, I should have been so happy, in such easy circumstances, or possessed of the same independence of character, as I am at present, it is impossible to determine. But of this I am sure, and I say it with gratitude to Providence, that I have during a long life been in easy circumstances, independent, and happy:—that I have had leisure to judge of right and wrong, to cultivate whatever talents I received from God, and to educate a great number of children, some of whom have already reflected honour upon their father.

The only advantage, which the world can gain from the publication of the lives of individuals, is the knowledge of the circumstances that tend to the formation of character, or of those which influence the happiness of life: on these, therefore, I dwell.

In consequence of my early marriage, I had for many years of my youth been confined, during my father's life, to a small income. Even at that time I was fully sensible, that this was of advantage to my character. It induced the habit of submitting to privations, and of turning aside from allurements to expense. My wife was a good economist. I never was fond of money, nor was I extravagant. I had no expensive tastes, and now, at sixty-five, I feel as little

disposed to love money, as I was at six and twenty: nor am I more inclined to wish for superfluities;

> " Houses, horses, pictures, planting,
> " *No* cruel something *e'er* was wanting."

Hence I was enabled early to live upon a little, and, as I grew older, with a moderate fortune I made myself affluent by confining my wishes within bounds something less extended than my income.

Since the time of which I write, the people of Ireland have improved more than any other people in Europe. At that period, there existed among a class just above those who worked for bread a strong disposition to cunning, and an eager desire to take advantage of the easiness and good nature of their superiors. I experienced this soon after I came into possession of my father's estate. I felt much disposed to satisfy the wishes of all who asked favours from me; but I found, that demands upon my compliance increased beyond the possibility of my means to gratify: a few refusals gave much offence, and overbalanced the kindness, which I had excited by favours of far greater value; so that a short course of experience fortunately taught me, that justice, and my own sense of generosity should be my guides; and that yielding to the representations of those, who could without any compunction frame a plausible tale, would in time lead me into serious difficulties, and would put it out of my power to do any thing for others, who had just claims upon me.

Shortly after my father's death I was suddenly informed that my sister was married to an officer, with whom I thought that she had been but slightly acquainted. I loved my sister with the greatest affection, and I suppose my pride was wounded by

her not having acquainted me with her attachment to this gentleman. Whatever was the cause of the emotion which I felt at hearing this unexpected news, its violence was extraordinary. No circumstance or misfortune of my whole life ever affected me suddenly with such pain and disappointment; I felt a kind of fever instantly kindle in my brain; objects became confused before my eyes; and, had not a burst of tears relieved me, I think that some injury to my health must have ensued. My eyes were never used to the melting mood; but on this occasion tears relieved, settled, and satisfied my mind, in a manner that was entirely new to me. I went immediately to my sister, who regretted the pain she had given me, and whose feelings at seeing me were, I believe, nearly as acute as my own.

Her marriage turned out fortunate. Her husband* and she, mutually attached, bred up their children successfully, and have enjoyed, and I hope may long enjoy, a large portion of domestic felicity! My sister and her husband accompanied me to England, to Hare Hatch, where we lived during some months, without the occurrence of any circumstance worth relating.

Mr. Day had now returned from his first expedition to France, and had taken a pleasant house at Stow-Hill, close to Lichfield. Here he steadily pursued his plan of educating his pupil, Sabrina; and, what was something singular, all the ladies of the place kindly took notice of the girl, and attributed to Mr. Day none but the real motives of his conduct. The bishop's palace at Lichfield, where Mr. Seward, a canon of the cathedral, resided, was the resort of every person in that neighbourhood who had any

* John Ruxton, Esq., of Black Castle, in the county of Meath.

taste for letters. Every stranger, who came well recommended to Lichfield, brought letters to the palace. This popularity in the literary world was well deserved, for Mr. Seward was a man of learning and taste; he was fond of conversation, in which he bore a considerable part, good-natured, and indulgent to the little foibles of others: he scarcely seemed to notice any animadversions, that were made upon his own. His simplicity, or what we understand by the French word *naïveté*, was beyond what could easily be believed of a man of such talents, or of one who had seen any thing of the world. Mrs. Seward was a handsome woman, of agreeable manners, she was generous, possessed of good sense, and capable of strong affection. They had two daughters, Anna and Sally.

Anna Seward is well known to the world by her works. Miss Sally Seward had her mother's good sense, without being endowed with her father's talents. Her manners were mild, gentle, and retired: capable of much genuine feeling, she was strongly attached to her friends, and had the power of attaching others to herself.

Under the fond and truly maternal care of Mrs. Seward was bred up Miss Honora Sneyd, daughter of Edward Sneyd, Esq., youngest son of Ralph Sneyd, Esq., of Bishton, in Staffordshire. Mr. Sneyd had become a widower early in life. He had been in great affliction at the death of his wife; and his relations and friends, who were numerous, had been eager to take charge of his daughters. Nothing could exceed the kindness, and care, with which Mrs. Seward executed the trust that she had undertaken. Nobody could have distinguished Miss Honora Sneyd from

Mrs. Seward's own daughters by any thing in Mrs. Seward's conduct, or in her outward deportment. Miss Sally Seward, who was nearer in age than Miss Seward to Honora Sneyd, became extremely attached to her; I have heard Honora often declare, that she felt for this lady all the tenderness of a sister; and that her own sentiments and character were formed by imitation of this early friend of her youth. Miss Sally Seward died when Honora was but thirteen, and she then became the more immediate pupil of Miss Seward. From her she acquired an ardent love of literature, and she afterwards formed for herself a refined and accurate taste. She was, however, so much eclipsed by that lady's more shining talents, that it was not on a first acquaintance, or to careless observers, that Honora Sneyd's uncommon understanding and clear judgment became conspicuous.

Soon after Mr. Day had established himself at Stow-Hill, he became intimate at the palace. His superior abilities, lofty sentiments, and singularity of manners, made him appear at Lichfield as a phenomenon; his unbounded charity to the poor, and his munificence to those of a higher class, who were in distress, won the esteem of all ranks; so that his breeding up a young girl in his house, without any female to take care of her, created no scandal, and appeared quite natural and free from impropriety. Sabrina, his ward, was received at the palace with tenderness and regard. She became a link between Mr. Day and Mr. Seward's family, that united them very strongly.

In the year 1770, I spent some time at Christmas with my friend Mr. Day, at Stow-Hill. We went every day to Lichfield, and most days to the palace,

where the agreeable conversation of the whole family, and in particular the sprightliness and literary talents of Miss Seward, engaged us to pass many agreeable hours.

During this intercourse, I perceived the superiority of Miss Honora Sneyd's capacity. Her memory was not copiously stored with poetry; and though no way deficient, her knowledge had not been much enlarged by books; but her sentiments were on all subjects so just, and were delivered with such blushing modesty, (though not without an air of conscious worth,) as to command attention from every one capable of appreciating female excellence. Her person was graceful, her features beautiful, and their expression such as to heighten the eloquence of every thing she said. I was six and twenty; and now, for the first time in my life, I saw a woman that equalled the picture of perfection, which existed in my imagination. I had long suffered from the want of that cheerfulness in a wife, without which marriage could not be agreeable to a man of such a temper as mine. I had borne this evil, I believe, with patience; but my not being happy at home exposed me to the danger of being too happy elsewhere.

The charms and superior character of Miss Honora Sneyd made an impression on my mind, such as I had never felt before. Dr. Small, about this period, settled in Birmingham; Mr. Keir was also in the neighbourhood; Dr. Darwin spent his vacant hours among us; and all these gentlemen were unanimous in their approbation of this lady.

Mr. Day alone was blind to the superiority of her character. She danced too well; she had too much an air of fashion in her dress and manners; and her

arms were not sufficiently round and white to please him. However, the more I saw, the more I admired her. She conversed with me with freedom; and seemed to feel, that I was the first person, who had seen the full value of her character. Miss Seward shone so brightly, that all objects within her sphere were dimmed by her lustre. When she perceived the impression, that her young friend had made upon me,—an impression, which I believe she discovered, long before I had discovered it myself,—she never shewed any of that mean jealousy, which is common among young women, when they find that one of their companions, who had never before been thought equal to themselves, is suddenly treated with pre-eminence. On the contrary, she seemed gratified by the praises bestowed upon her friend, and took every opportunity of placing whatever was said or done by Honora in the most advantageous point of view.

Whilst I was upon this visit, Mr. André, afterwards Major André, who lost his life so unfortunately in America, came to Lichfield. This gentleman had met Miss Honora Sneyd at Buxton, or Matlock, and had paid his addresses to her, without at first meeting with any discouragement from Mrs. André, the young gentleman's mother, or, I believe, from Mr. Sneyd. But when the parents on both sides came to consider more coolly, they saw that a match, even where each party seemed well suited to the other, should not be determined upon, till a sufficient fortune for a comfortable maintenance could be provided between them. As Mrs. André and Mr. Sneyd had the good sense to raise no obstacles between their children, making only a kind and reasonable statement of the imprudence of marrying young without a sufficient

fortune, no romantic difficulties urged them to resistance, and they, by tacit consent, kept at a distance from each other, except when accidental circumstances brought them together. The first time I saw Major André at the palace, I did not perceive from his manner, or from that of the young lady, that any attachment subsisted between them. On the contrary, from the great attention which Miss Seward paid to him, and from the constant admiration which Mr. André bestowed on her, I thought, that, though there was a considerable disproportion in their ages, there might exist some courtship between them. Miss Seward, however, undeceived me. I never met Mr. André again; and from all that I then saw, or have since known, I believe that Miss Honora Sneyd was never much disappointed by the conclusion of this attachment. Mr. André appeared to me pleased and dazzled by the lady. She admired and estimated highly his talents; but he did not possess the reasoning mind, which she required. Miss Seward, in a note to her "*Monody on the Death of Major André*," has asserted, that Mr. André, in despair upon the marriage of Honora Sneyd, quitted his business as a merchant, insinuating that he was—"Out with it!"—*jilted* by that lady,—and that, in consequence of this disappointment, he went into the army, and quitted this country.

The fact is, that Major André's first commission was dated March the 4th, 1771, and Miss Honora Sneyd was married the 17th of July 1773—that is, two years after Mr. André went into the army. Despair, on hearing of the marriage of Honora Sneyd, could not have driven him to quit his profession, and his country; he having quitted both two years before that marriage.

To return to the course of my narrative, from which I could not help starting, to set this misstatement right — Mr. Day knew all my feelings: in the progress of my acquaintance with this lady, he heard me talk in no cold strains of Miss Honora Sneyd's perfections. — I continually expressed surprise at his not seeming to prefer her, but for some time he continued to be insensible of Honora's charms. Sabrina Sydney had, perhaps, preoccupied his mind. She was now too old to remain in my friend's house without a protectress; he therefore determined to put her to a very reputable boarding-school at Sutton Coldfield. Here it was intended, that she should improve in reading, writing, and arithmetic, and in all the useful species of accomplishments. To make a musician or a dancer of his pupil was far from his wish. During the early part of the year 1771, Mr. Day's intentions with regard to Sabrina began to change, for his mind turned toward Miss Honora Sneyd. He learned from her friend, that this lady had no engagement or attachment, that could prevent his success, if he could convince her, that the views of life, and the plan of happiness in marriage, which he had laid down, could be made compatible with those, which she had determined to pursue. Few courtships ever began between such young people with so little appearance of romance: both however were perfectly sincere and in earnest, and for many months they were asked together to every party at Lichfield, and were allowed, by a kind of tacit consent, to converse with each other, to have every reasonable opportunity of becoming acquainted with each other's tempers, tastes, and dispositions.

After spending some time with Mr. Day, I re-

turned home to Hare Hatch. My friend's letters informed me of his feelings and opinions: I soon perceived, that he had not only become sensible of the strength of understanding possessed by the object of his attention; but that, beside the value of her mind, he began to feel the power of her charms. He thought his suit in such a favourable train, that he questioned me about my feelings. He wrote me one of the most eloquent letters that I ever read, to point out to me the folly and meanness of indulging a hopeless passion for any woman, let her merit be what it might; declaring, at the same time, that he "never would marry so as to divide himself from his chosen friend." "Tell me," said he, "have you sufficient strength of mind, totally to subdue love, that cannot be indulged compatibly with peace, or honour, or virtue?"

I answered, that nothing but trial could make me acquainted with the influence, which reason might have over my feelings; that I would go with my family to Lichfield, where I should be in the company of the dangerous object; and that I would faithfully acquaint him with all my thoughts and feelings. We went to Lichfield, and staid there for some time with Mr. Day. I saw him continually in company with Honora Sneyd: I saw, that he was received with approbation, and that he looked forward to marrying her at no very distant period. When I saw this, I can affirm with truth, that I felt pleasure, and even exultation. I looked to the happiness of two people, for whom I had the most perfect esteem, without the intervention of a single sentiment or feeling, that could make me suspect I should ever repent having been instrumental to their union. I was the depositary of every thought, that passed in the mind of

Mr. Day; and from every thing he told me, and from my own observations, I was persuaded, that nothing now was wanting, but a declaration on his part, and compliance on the part of the lady.

Just at this period, when we were walking together one summer's evening in the Close, a public walk at Lichfield, which was then much frequented by the young people, something was said in allusion to the intended match; and Miss Honora Sneyd in reply expressed doubts as to its conclusion. I supposed that she adverted to the state of Mr. Day's mind; and I warmly gave it as my opinion that nothing was likely to prevent what I so much desired. She shook her head. The next morning Mr. Day, in a very solemn manner, delivered to me a packet of some sheets of paper, which he said was a proposal of marriage to Honora Sneyd. "It contains," said he "the sum of many conversations that have passed between us. I am satisfied," he continued, "that, if the plan of life I have here laid down meets her approbation, we shall be perfectly happy. Honora Sneyd is so reasonable, so perfectly sincere, and so much to be relied on, that, if once she resolves to live a calm, secluded life, she will never wish to return to more gay or splendid scenes. If she once turn away from public admiration, she will never look back again with regret."

I took the packet; my friend requested, that I would go to the palace, and deliver it myself. I went — and I delivered it with real satisfaction to Honora. She desired me to come the next morning for an answer. Mr. Day expressed extreme anxiety during the interval; more, indeed, than I had ever heard him acknowledge upon any other occasion.

In the morning I received an answer, which from the manner in which it was delivered to me, seemed to require a farther communication. I gave it to Mr. Day, and left him to peruse it by himself. When I returned, I found him actually in a fever. The letter contained an excellent answer to his arguments in favour of the rights of men, and a clear dispassionate view of the rights of women.

Miss Honora Sneyd would not admit the unqualified control of a husband over all her actions; she did not feel, that seclusion from society was indispensably necessary to preserve female virtue, or to secure domestic happiness. Upon terms of reasonable equality, she supposed, that mutual confidence might best subsist; she said, that, as Mr. Day had decidedly declared his determination to live in perfect seclusion from what is usually called the world, it was fit she should decidedly declare, that she would not change her present mode of life, with which she had no reason to be dissatisfied, for any dark and untried system, that could be proposed to her.

Mr. Day continued really ill for some days. Dr. Darwin ordered him to be bled, and administered, wisely, to that part of him which was most diseased —his mind. The intimacy, which subsisted among the inhabitants of Lichfield, prevented any estrangement between Mr. Day and the family at the palace; and in some weeks a new object of attention was presented to the Lichfield world. Mr. Sneyd (Honora's father), who had hitherto lived in London, now came to establish himself at Lichfield. He assembled all his daughters to reside with him, and with them came his fifth daughter, Miss Elizabeth Sneyd. She had lived with Mr. and Mrs. Powys

(of the Abbey, Shrewsbury), the kind friends and relations by whom she had been educated. Mrs. Powys, wife to Henry Powys, Esq., was Mr. Sneyd's niece.

Circumstances, in themselves entirely trivial, become to certain persons in peculiar situations highly interesting. In relating the events of life, these trivial circumstances force themselves upon the attention, and obtain, as it were, by impertinent intrusion, a place in the narrative. To balance this inconvenience, these very circumstances give an air of reality, and of that perfect simplicity, which ought to be apparent in every page of biography. This reflection occurred, when I began to mention the first appearance of Miss Elizabeth Sneyd at Lichfield, which though quite uninteresting to me at the time, was marked by the vivid interest awakened in my mind at this period of my life.

I had introduced archery as an amusement among the gentlemen in the neighbourhood; and had proposed a prize of a silver arrow, to be shot for at a bowling-green, where our butts had been erected. All the ladies, who frequented the amusements of Lichfield, were assembled, and Miss Seward appeared with her usual sprightliness and address, accompanied by Honora.

We had musick and dancing; some of the gentlemen fenced, and vaulted, and leaped; and the summer's evening was spent with as much innocent cheerfulness, as any evening that I can remember. Miss Elizabeth Sneyd and her father came among us in the middle of our amusements; just as a country dance was nearly ended, Miss Honora Sneyd introduced me to her sister, desiring me to dance with her,

to prevent her being engaged by some stranger, with whom they might afterwards not chuse to form an acquaintance. Miss Elizabeth Sneyd was, in the opinion of half the persons who knew them, the handsomest of the two sisters; her eyes were uncommonly beautiful and expressive, she was of a clear brown, and of a more healthy complexion than Honora. She had acquired more literature, had more what is called the manners of a person of fashion, had more wit, more vivacity, and certainly more humour than her sister. She had, however, less personal grace; she walked heavily, danced indifferently, had much less energy of manner and of character, and was not endowed with, or had not then acquired the same powers of reasoning, the same inquiring range of understanding, the same love of science, or, in one word, the same decisive judgment as her sister.

Notwithstanding something fashionable in this young lady's appearance, Mr. Day observed her with complacent attention. Her dancing but indifferently, and with no symptom of delight, pleased Mr. Day's fancy; her conversation was playful, and never disputatious, so that Mr. Day had liberty and room enough, to descant at large and at length upon whatever became the subject of conversation. She was struck by his eloquence, her attention was awakened by the novelty of his opinions; he appeared to her young mind as the most extraordinary and romantic person in the world. His educating a young girl for his wife, his unbounded generosity, his scorn of wealth and titles, his romantic notions of love, which led him to think, that, where it was mutual and genuine, the rest of the world vanished, and lovers became all in all to each other, made a deep impression upon her,

and made her imagine, that, if such a man loved her with truth and violence, she was capable of as strong attachment, and of as disinterested sacrifices, as could be made to her. Every body perceived, that Miss Elizabeth Sneyd had made a greater impression in three weeks upon Mr. Day, than her superior sister had made in twelve months.

One restraint, which had acted long and steadily upon my feelings, was now removed: my friend was no longer attached to Miss Honora Sneyd. My former admiration of her returned with unabated ardour. The more I compared her with other women, the more I was obliged to acknowledge her superiority. This admiration was unknown to every body but Mr. Day. He could not see more plainly than I did the imprudence and folly of becoming too fond of an object, which I could not hope to obtain. With all the eloquence of virtue and of friendship, he represented to me the danger, the criminality of such an attachment, I knew, that there is but one certain method of escaping such dangers—*flight*.

I resolved to go abroad: Mr. Day determined to accompany me to France, and to dedicate a large portion of his time to the acquirement of those accomplishments, which he had formerly treated with sovereign contempt. Miss Elizabeth Sneyd had convinced him, that he could not with propriety abuse and ridicule talents, in which he appeared obviously deficient. She told him, that she considered such acquirements as frivolous, in many situations ridiculous; but that she could not be satisfied with the abhorrence, which upon all occasions he expressed, of accomplishments, which he had not been able to attain. On her part she promised not

to go to London, Bath, or any other public place of amusement, till his return; and she engaged with alacrity, to prosecute an excellent course of reading, which they had agreed upon before his departure.

As to myself, I took the most scrupulous pains to avoid whatever might induce any of our acquaintance to think, that I felt more than common esteem for Miss Honora Sneyd. I took every opportunity of declaring my intention of settling in Ireland, whenever I should return from France; and, in various incidental conversations, I endeavoured to convince her, that young women, who had not large fortunes, should not disdain to marry, even though the romantic notions of finding heroes, or prodigies of men might not be entirely gratified. Honora listened, and assented; and I left England with perfect conviction, that I had not endangered the happiness of any of my friends, and that I had not devoted myself to unavailing regret, or unreasonable hope.

CHAPTER X.

Mr. Day and I quitted England, and we took with us my son, who was then about seven or eight years old. I engaged a gentleman to travel with us as my boy's tutor, so that we might be at liberty to go where we pleased, without being under anxiety for our pupil. I hoped to teach the child to speak French with a proper accent, and without his being obliged to learn it as a dead language: and I at the same time thought, that I should secure him from the danger of being spoiled during my absence, if I left him behind me. I am not sure, that I judged rightly; but, if I now doubt, it arises perhaps from my perceiving the inconveniences which ensued from my having made this decision. I am not able to determine, what might have been the result of a different conduct.

I must not here omit a remarkable circumstance, which ought to be recorded in justice to Rousseau's penetration in judging of children. In passing through Paris at this time, we went to see him: he took a good deal of notice of my boy; I asked him to tell me any thing that struck him in the child's manners or conversation. He took my son with him in his usual morning's walk, and when he came back, Rousseau told me, that, as far as he could judge from

two hours observation, he thought him a boy of abilities, which had been well cultivated; and that in particular his answers to some questions on history proved, contrary to the opinion given in Emilius and Sophia, that history can be advantageously learned by children, if it be taught reasonably, and not merely by rote. "But," said Rousseau, "I remark in your son a propensity to party prejudice, which will be a great blemish in his character."

I asked how he could in so short a time form so decided an opinion. He told me, that, whenever my son saw a handsome horse, or a handsome carriage in the street, he always exclaimed, "That is an English horse, or an English carriage!" And that, even down to a pair of shoe buckles, every thing that appeared to be good of its kind was always pronounced by him to be English. "This sort of party prejudice," said Rousseau, "if suffered to become a ruling motive in his mind, will lead to a thousand evils: for not only will his own country, his own village, or club, or even a knot of his private acquaintance, be the object of his exclusive admiration, but he will be governed by his companions, whatever they may be, and they will become the arbiters of his destiny."

In fact, the boy had the species of party spirit, which Rousseau remarked, and this prophecy, as after events proved, shewed his sagacity.

We remained but two days at Paris, for Mr. Day had very little curiosity as to the common objects, which engage the attention of travellers. My son was too young, to learn any thing of real advantage by visiting public monuments, or libraries, or galleries of pictures; and at that time I was more intent upon seeing varieties of people, than the works of art;

in this plan I was most certainly mistaken. I might have acquired a very large portion of useful and ornamental knowledge, had I passed a few weeks at Paris.

We proceeded to Lyons, like true English travellers, without stopping on the road to examine what was curious, or worthy of observation. We determined to pass the winter at Lyons, as it was a place where excellent masters of all sorts were to be found; and here Mr. Day put himself to every species of torture, ordinary and extraordinary, to compel his antigallican limbs, in spite of their natural rigidity, to dance, and fence, and manage the *great horse*. To perform his promise to Miss E. Sneyd honorably, he gave up seven or eight hours of the day to these exercises, for which he had not the slightest taste, and for which, except horsemanship, he manifested the most sovereign contempt. It was astonishing to behold the energy, with which he persevered in these pursuits. I have seen him stand between two boards, which reached from the ground higher than his knees: these boards were adjusted with screws, so as barely to permit him to bend his knees, and to rise up and sink down. By these means M. Huise proposed to force Mr. Day's knees outward; but his screwing was in vain. He succeeded in torturing his patient; but original formation, and inveterate habit, resisted all his endeavours at personal improvement. I could not help pitying my philosophic friend, pent up in durance vile for hours together, with his feet in the stocks, a book in his hand, and contempt in his heart.

In the mean time I lodged myself in excellent and cheerful apartments upon the ramparts. I boarded in the family of a gentleman who was at the head of

the Military Academy at Lyons, where I soon learned to speak French, so as to be intelligible. I read and understood it well; and I systematically avoided any attempt to write that language with critical accuracy, as I believed, and still believe, that in composition or eloquence "one language only can one genius fit;" and that, however the literature of various countries may enrich the mind, a mixture of their vocabularies in writing, or speaking, is always prejudicial. The curse of Babel lights upon most of those, who speak a leash of languages at once. I do not mean to say, that an accurate knowledge of the written language of France, Germany, and Italy, is hurtful: on the contrary, I am sensible of the advantages, that may be obtained by a critical knowledge of any of them, and of the inexhaustible entertainment which they afford; what I object to is, such a habit of writing or speaking them, as induces the mind to *think* partly in one language, and partly in another. For instance, I acquired at Lyons such a knowledge of the technical vocabulary of mechanics, that I was able to express myself clearly on such subjects in French, though I could not explain myself on them in English; and I have at this instant by me a treatise on water-mills, which I wrote in French, and which I never could induce myself to translate, because it was difficult to me to find appropriate terms in my own language.

M. Charpentier, who was the master of the Academy at Lyons, had seen much of the world, and communicated agreeably what he had seen. He had been controller of the household to the embassy at Constantinople for upwards of twenty years, and had been no inattentive observer. I remember distinctly his having mentioned to me many things relative to

Turkey, which I afterwards read in de Tott's Memoirs; and which I heard condemned in de Tott as travellers' wonders. Mad^me^. Charpentier was young, beautiful, lively, and accomplished, of an excellent disposition, and less fond of publick amusements than most French women. During nearly two years that I was at Lyons, I never had occasion to repent my having established myself in their family, as I met with uniform kindness and confidence from every part of it. I had letters of introduction from several quarters, which made me soon acquainted with the houses, where strangers were received. M. de la Verpilliere was at that time Commandant of Lyons; his son was Town-Major; hospitable, gallant, dissipated, and very fond of the English.

To continue in this society, which was of course considered as the court of Lyons, it was necessary to play—and for play I had little taste, and much salutary horror. I therefore resolved to lay aside a certain sum, I think a hundred and fifty louis d'ors, to play with, and these *I determined to lose.* I began with caution, took pains to learn the game, and played with so much attention, that I was considered as a young man whose secret passion was gaming. I was permitted to win, and, by degrees, as fortune favoured me, I learned how to win, when I was not permitted. The play was in general far from *desperate;* but whenever any body sallied beyond the ordinary course, I always took him up, and was so frequently successful, that I did not often meet with competitors. In short, I played with so much boldness, and was so much at my ease, that I had all the advantages that I could possibly expect; and as winning or losing was perfectly indifferent to me,

I had an opportunity of observing manners and character at leisure, while the minds of the company were engaged or inflamed by the course of the game. My destined sum did not fail, till long after my having obtained by it all that I desired. When the last louis d'or had left me, I quitted the field with a joyful heart, and retired to live with such society as I had selected from my usual associates. I continued to visit these, but I never was for a moment tempted again to play, while I remained at Lyons.

An occupation far more agreeable to my taste soon presented itself to me. A project for enlarging the city of Lyons had been formed by M. Perrache, an architect of that city. A company had subscribed a large sum to carry it on; and it was considered as a speculation, that promised much advantage to the city, and much profit to the company. Walking one morning with a gentleman, who was deeply concerned in this project, I adverted to some obvious mistakes, that appeared to me to have been made in the progress of the work; and as he perceived, that I knew something of engineering, he invited me to meet Perrache and some of the principal associates. We met: Perrache listened with temper and attention to what I said; and it was proposed, that I should conduct a certain part of the work for some time. In this I succeeded so well, that I was pressed to manage a large part of the business, which required skill and boldness. I undertook it upon a singular stipulation, that I should draw for a certain sum of money on the treasurer of the company every Saturday, without giving any other account than a simple statement under my hand, that I had laid it out to the best of my ability for the benefit of the company.

The object of the scheme was to turn the course of the Rhone from its usual channel, which hemmed in the city on the only side, toward which it could be extended. Ancient historians describe Lyons, Lugdunum, in the time of Claudius, as standing on a confined spot of ground, resembling in shape the Greek letter Delta. A description which had continued to be exact from that time, till the period when this project was undertaken. The Saone on one side, steep hills on the other, and the Rhone rushing forward with great violence at the bottom of these hills, and turning nearly at right angles from its direct course, to meet the Saone beneath the ramparts, shut in the city, and prevented the extension of its buildings. Now to enlarge the town, it was proposed to divert the Rhone into a new channel, so as to form a junction with the Saone nearly a mile farther from the town than it was at that time. The deserted bed of the river was to be filled with the rubbish of the city, so as to obtain ground for extending the buildings in that quarter. After a new channel had been partly cut for the river, it was proposed to turn the rapid course of the Rhone into this new channel, with the hope, that, as the soil was light and sandy, the violence of the flood, from the melting of snow in the distant mountains of Savoy, would excavate a bed of sufficient capacity to receive the whole of the river without any farther trouble. By piles and earth, an embankment had been effected, that nearly shut out the Rhone from the Saone. A gap of not more than twenty or thirty feet remained to be closed. To expedite this work, I constructed the following apparatus, instead of using the mere force of hands, which had hitherto been alone employed.

To cross the Rhone, a species of ferryboat was in use, which required no labour in the passage. It was a large strong boat, with sides nearly parallel; it was held from going with the current by a rope of twenty or thirty yards long: this rope, by means of a large pulley, was attached to a strong cable, that was stretched across the river, from posts fifteen or eighteen feet high, that were elevated on each bank. The rope that held this boat was, by these means, kept nearly in the direction of the stream, and at right angles to the cable, which was stretched across the river, so that as the boat moved, this rope ran along the cable, and did not retard its progress. To move the boat, no force but that of the stream was employed. The rope, by which it was held, was hooked upon a staple, fastened near one end of one side of the boat, that is to say, at about one third or one fourth of the length of the boat, from the end. When the boat was pushed off from the land, the stream forced the boat into an oblique direction, because of the situation of the rope. The current was thus obliged to act upon the boat as upon an inclined plane: so that, being prevented from moving in the direction of the current, the boat was forced in the only direction in which it could move, that is, across the river. These boats were called *trailles*. To transport earth and gravel into the opening which was to be filled up, men had been employed to carry baskets of earth on their heads into the boat, and after the boat had crossed, to empty them into the water. A great number of men were thus employed, who could effect but little, as they were in each other's way in getting into the boat, and still more so in emptying their baskets.

To remedy this inconvenience, I had two strong piles erected, twelve feet above the surface of the water, on the side where the earth was dug; upon these there was placed a moving platform, like a very large cart with low sides, the whole turning on an axletree, supported in a fork on the top of each of the piles. This platform was sixteen or eighteen feet square, and could contain a large quantity of gravel. A gangway, or inclined scaffolding of boards, led to this cart from the ground, by which labourers with baskets could ascend and fill it. A similar platform was erected on the *traille*, or boat, into which the contents of that which was filled on the shore were emptied. The boat then passed the river, and the load was emptied at once into the water. In the meantime, the labourers filled the land platform, which was ready to be emptied into the *traille* at the moment of its return. This contrivance succeeded perfectly well: not a moment was wasted, and the whole contents of the platform belonging to the boat could be emptied exactly where they were wanted.

I also constructed, across a *ravine*, a bridge supported on slight trestles, that was sufficiently strong and broad to hold a wheelbarrow, On this bridge, which was inclined downwards to the place where the barrows were to be emptied, by means of a cradle drawn up by pullies, I mounted a number of wheelbarrows, which followed each other, and, from the manner in which they were guided, reached their destination in regular succession. A bridge, wide enough to receive the labourers, as well as their loads, would have been preferable in point of expedition; but I could not procure a sufficient number of men

willing, or indeed able, to pass over a gangway fifty or sixty yards long, and sixteen or seventeen and in some places twenty feet from the ground. A floor of four feet wide would not have been sufficient, unless it were railed in; an expense which would have been too great for the purpose. This gangway was only the breadth of one board; and as it was a new and entertaining sight to see the wheel-barrows pass over it without human guides, crowds of people came from Lyons to look at the spectacle. To gain a few pence by his boldness, one of the labourers used to commit himself to the uncertain aerial path; but unfortunately one day, when Mad^me^· l'Intendante of Lyons appeared, he, to outdo his usual outdoings, performed some gambols, which overturned his wheelbarrow and broke his arm.

I immediately took down this apparatus, and substituted a less dangerous system, which, though more costly, would be free from hazard. I was satisfied, that this instance of prudence gained me friends; because those who approved of it were sensible, that it must cost me some struggle to give up before numbers a plan, which had succeeded as to the object for which it was intended, and which had novelty, and perhaps some ingenuity, to recommend it. No other accident happened, and the work went on rapidly and prosperously.

As soon as I had engaged in this work, and found that I should be likely to continue some time at Lyons, I invited my wife to come over to me; I had left her with her father and sisters at Black-Bourton. Accompanied by one of her sisters, she arrived at Lyons, where she staid till winter; at the commencement of which, she being weary of French society,

and anxious to be in England before the time when she expected to be confined, as she had a dread of lying in at Lyons, or in any part of France, took an opportunity of returning to England, under the care of my friend, Mr. Day. He having now learnt all that it was possible for riding, fencing, and dancing-masters to teach him, determined to go back to England, to claim, as the reward of his labours, the hand of Miss Elizabeth Sneyd.

During the time when I was engaged in the conduct of the public works at Lyons, I had not leisure to attend sufficiently to my son. While my friend, Mr. Day, remained with me, he was so kind as to pay particular attention to him; but after Mr. Day left us, my boy was under the care of a tutor, whom I had brought from England. My son was then almost nine years old; he had considerable abilities, uncommon strength and hardiness of body, great vivacity, and was not a little disposed to think and act for himself. I had begun his education upon the mistaken principles of Rousseau; and I had pursued them with as much steadiness, and, so far as they could be advantageous, with as much success as I could desire. Whatever regarded the health, strength, and agility of my son, had amply justified the system of my master; but I found myself entangled in difficulties with regard to my child's mind and temper. He was generous, brave, good-natured, and what is commonly called good-tempered; but he was scarcely to be controlled. It was difficult to urge him to any thing that did not suit his fancy, and more difficult to restrain him from what he wished to follow. In short, he was self-willed, from a spirit of independence, which had been inculcated

by his early education, and which he cherished the more from the inexperience of his own powers.

I must here acknowledge, with deep regret, not only the error of a theory, which I had adopted at a very early age, when older and wiser persons than myself had been dazzled by the eloquence of Rousseau; but I must also reproach myself with not having, after my arrival in France, paid as much attention to my boy as I had done in England, or as much as was necessary to prevent the formation of those habits, which could never afterwards be eradicated. I dwell on this painful subject to warn other parents against the errors, which I committed. I had successfully reached a certain point in the education of my pupil; I had acquired complete ascendancy over his mind; he respected and loved me; but, relying upon what I had already done, I trusted him to the care of another, who, with the best intentions in the world, had no experience in the management of children, or any habitual influence over his particular pupil. The boy soon obtained the mastery. The tutor was a man of abilities, and truly solicitous to discharge his duty; but he was of an easy temper, and his mind was intent upon objects of his own. He had a slight impediment in his speech, and had not a favourable disposition for learning languages. He had a French master, to whom he dedicated at least two hours every day. My son was invited, and tempted by various means, to partake of the lessons, to which his tutor so assiduously attended; but the boy could never be induced to get by rote the French irregular verbs, or to hear critical remarks upon the uses of certain common particles, which strangers are apt to confound and misapply. But in the mean

time he learned to speak French fluently, and with a good accent; and before his tutor could express his wants at dinner with common accuracy, or indeed before he became intelligible to the people with whom he lived, my son was able to read and converse without any hesitation. The consequence might be easily foreseen. The boy perceived his superiority upon a subject of mutual pursuit; and the tutor, who had himself failed in learning French, could never afterwards persuade his pupil to learn Latin in the usual dull routine; neither could he induce him to apply steadily to any species of study, that required sedentary habits, or continued attention.

Even then, had I perceived, or, to speak with more candour, had I vigorously counteracted these faults, they might have been cured. But I had entered into engagements with the company who were employed in turning the course of the Rhone, which prevented me from applying myself to the education of my son. I therefore determined to send him to school, during the time that I should remain at Lyons.

The Jesuits had lately been dismissed from their magnificent establishment in that city, and *les pères de l'oratoire* had been introduced in their place. The neatness, order, extent, and grandeur of the building, the regulations of the seminary, and the deportment and high character of its masters, had prepossessed me much in its favour.

One point of considerable moment, however, made me hesitate. There were great hazards in sending a boy to a Catholic seminary, at an age when he was liable to receive indelible prejudices; and in committing him to the care of persons, who thought the

attempt at conversion a merit, and who believed it to be a duty, as the only means of saving a heretic soul from perdition. I went to the Father, who was then at the head of the institution, and stated to him with perfect openness my views and apprehensions.

The old man, in whose countenance benevolence and wisdom were strongly portrayed, assured me, that he would do every thing in his power to prevent any interference in the religious principles of my child; he said, that he deplored the blindness of my countrymen; but that, as to me, he would receive the charge of my son as a trust reposed in him by me, which he was bound to execute according to my wishes, when he agreed to accept it. He added, that he knew how I was employed at Lyons, and he perceived how that employment interfered with the education of my son; he was therefore willing to have a share in cultivating talents, which he heard highly spoken of among his friends. In short he promised not to meddle with my son's religion, and to inform me, if he found that any of his under-masters disobeyed his orders on this subject.

About a month afterwards I paid a visit to the reverend father; he told me, that notwithstanding his injunctions to the contrary, one of the under-masters had endeavoured to teach my son such doctrines, as he thought necessary for his salvation. "I will tell you," said the father, "exactly what passed: Le père Jerome, from the time your son came, had formed the pious design of converting your little gentleman; and for this purpose he had taken particular notice of him, and had from time to time given him bonbons. One day he took your boy between his knees, and began from the beginning of

things to teach him what he ought to believe. 'My little man,' said he, 'Did you ever hear of God?'

" 'Yes.'

" 'You know, that, before he made the world, his spirit brooded over the vast deep, which was a great sea without shores, and *without bottom.* Then he made this world out of earth.'

" 'Where did he find the *earth?*' asked the boy.

" 'At the bottom of the sea,' replied father Jerome.

" 'But,' said the boy, 'you told me just now, that the sea had no bottom!'"

The Superior of the collége des oratoires concluded, "You may, Sir, I think, be secure, that your son, when capable of making such a reply, is in no great danger of becoming a catholic from the lectures of such profound teachers as these."

The Superior kept his word with me, and I never had reason to believe, that any farther attempts at conversion were made upon my son.

CHAPTER XI.

On every change of residence, in every place to which we go, we probably find some individual more suited to our taste than any other. During my residence at Lyons, I felt this sort of predilection for the Marquis de la Poype, a gentleman with whom I then first became acquainted. He was a man of much general information, well acquainted with English literature, and sufficiently master of the language, to be able to hold a conversation upon common subjects. His manners were peculiarly pleasing, and he was married to a beautiful woman, whom he loved with an affection, that was not often known to subsist between married people in France, or at least in the part of France which I had seen. He pressed me much to pay him a visit at his chateau in Dauphiny; and at length I promised to pass with him some of the Christmas holidays. An English gentleman of the name of Rosenhagen went with me.

We arrived in the evening at a very antique building, surrounded by a moat, and with gardens laid out in the style which was common in England in the beginning of the last century. These were enclosed by high walls, intersected by canals, and cut into parterres by sandy walks. We were ushered into a good drawing room, the walls of which were furnished

with ancient tapestry. When dinner was served, we crossed a large and lofty hall, that was hung round with armour, and with the spoils of the chase; we passed into a moderate sized eating room, in which there was no visible fireplace, but which was sufficiently heated by invisible stoves. The want of the cheerful light of a fire cast a gloom over our repast, and the howling of the wind did not contribute to lessen this dismal effect. But the dinner was good, and the wine, which was produced from the vineyard close to the house, was excellent. Madame de la Poype, and two or three of her friends, who were on a visit at her house, conversed agreeably, and all feeling of winter and seclusion was forgotten.

At night, when I was shewn into my chamber, the footman asked if I chose to have my bed warmed. I inquired whether it was well aired; he assured me, with a tone of integrity, that I had nothing to fear, for "that it had not been slept in for half a year." The French are not afraid of damp beds, but they have great dread of catching some infectious disease from sleeping in any bed, in which a stranger may have recently lain.

My bed-chamber at this Chateau was hung with tapestry, and as the footman assured me of the safety of my bed, he drew aside a piece of the tapestry, which discovered a small recess in the wall, that held a *grabat*, in which my servant was invited to repose. My servant was an Englishman, whose indignation nothing but want of words to express it could have concealed: he deplored my unhappy lot; as for himself, he declared, with a look of horror, that nothing could induce him to go into such a pigeon-hole. I went to visit the accommo-

dations of my companion, Mr. Rosenhagen; I found him in a spacious apartment, hung all round with tapestry, so that there was no appearance of any windows. I was far from being indifferent to the comfort of a good dry bed; but poor Mr. Rosenhagen, besides being delicate, was hypochondriac. With one of the most rueful countenances I ever beheld, he informed me, that he must certainly *die* of cold; his teeth chattered whilst he pointed to the tapestry at one end of the room, which waved to and fro with the wind, and looking behind it, I found a large stone casement window without a single pane of glass or shutters of any kind. He determined not to take off his clothes; but I, gaining courage from despair, undressed, went to bed, and never slept better in my life, or ever wakened in better health or spirits, than at ten o'clock the next morning.

How Rosenhagen fared, or what happened to him afterwards, I really forget. After breakfast, the Marquis took us to visit the Grotto de la Baume, which was at the distance of not more than two leagues from his house.

We were most hospitably received at the house of an old officer, who was *Seigneur* of the place. His hall was more amply furnished with implements of the chase and spoils of the field, than any which I have ever seen, or ever heard described. There were nets of such dimensions, and of such strength as were quite new to me: bows, cross-bows, of prodigious power: guns of a length and weight that could not be wielded by the strength of modern arms; some with old match-locks, and with rests to be stuck into the ground, and others with wheel-

locks; besides modern fire-arms of all descriptions: horns of deer, and tusks of wild-boars, were placed in compartments in such numbers, that every part of the walls was covered either with arms or trophies.

The master of the mansion, in bulk, dress, and general appearance, was suited to the style of life, which might be expected from what we had seen at our entrance. He was above six feet high, strong, and robust, though upwards of sixty years of age; he wore a leathern jerkin, and instead of having his hair powdered and tied in a long queue, according to the fashion of the day, he wore his own short grey locks; his address was plain, frank, and hearty; but by no means coarse or vulgar. He was of an ancient family, but of a moderate fortune. I forget whether his wife was living, but she did not appear; his son assisted him in doing the honors of the house. We were invited to dinner, to which we were to return after our visit to the grotto.

We were provided with guides and torches, and at no great distance from the castle we entered the cavern. The arch which hung over the entrance, was not so large as that of Peake's hole, in Derbyshire; it was however more striking because it was free from all signs of human habitation. A clear, but not a broad stream, issued through the opening, leaving a narrow dry path on each side of it, which led one or two hundred yards into the hill that covered the cavern. Here the rock dipped in such a manner, as nearly to close the channel of the stream; but, by creeping near the ground, we got through this narrow passage, and found ourselves in another reach of the cavern, the sides of which, of solid and continued rock, lay in strata, so as to

form steps of twenty or thirty inches high, to a height of fifteen or twenty feet. These were often sloping, and always slippery, so that it was a business of no common danger to scramble upwards, and a subject of terror to think of coming down again.

It is seven and thirty years since I was in Dauphiny, and I now write without an exact recollection of the sizes or distances of objects; but the objects themselves must have been striking, since they left such a durable impression on my mind. I know that there have been published accounts of the Grotto de la Baume; but I now write without reading them, purposely to try how far my memory is or is not exact; and to shew how far objects, that in youth forcibly struck the imagination, remain fixed in the mind in advanced age.

Of the chambers into which we clambered, in this cavern, I have a distinct recollection, especially of *the chamber of the bats;* into this we crept by a low and narrow opening. It is a room not less than twenty feet square, and about thirteen feet high. The dung of the bats was two or three inches in depth under our feet. This had all accumulated in the course of a few years. Three or four years previous to the time when I saw it, the chamber had been completely cleansed for the value of the manure. The bats were suspended from the roof, one below another, clustering like bees; they were then five deep, so that fifty thousand would be a moderate estimate of their numbers; and I had no reason to doubt what the old baron told me, that several acres of ground had been most highly manured with their dung, which had been collected from different parts of the cave.

While we were examining this chamber, some of the bats were disturbed; they flew about with such violence, as to extinguish several of our lights; and, had not our conductor prudently ordered one of our attendants to hurry out of the apartment before his torch was blown out, we should have been left without any light, at the mercy of those odious animals, whose stench was uncommonly noisome. We were all heartily glad to escape from their buffeting, and after quitting their den, and walking along a narrow ledge, we entered another room larger than the chamber of the bats;—a grotto which struck me as the most brilliant and magnificent spectacle I had ever beheld. It was surrounded with exquisite sparkling incrustations, which towards the bottom of the walls, spread upon the floor in such a manner as to form steps. From the ceiling several large stalactites depended in regular order, and in the middle of the grotto there stood a circular altar of crystal finishing in a tabular form slightly convex. The shape of this altar, or *pedestal*, as perhaps it might more properly be called, swelled gradually as it descended, so as to form a base in the *shape* of a trumpet. This, if I recollect rightly, stood upon a circular platform, which was raised on three or four steps, all of the same crystalized materials. The surface of the pedestal was formed of leaves, or laminæ, that fell over each other like the covering of a pine-apple; but increasing in size towards the bottom, as they approached the trumpet-formed base. The steps were horizontal, not of one continued surface, but appeared like rows of large scollop shells, very shallow, about eight or ten inches diameter, and encrusted in such a manner as to resemble the coating of a rock melon. All this

tracing was wonderfully regular, as are all the operations of nature where they are undisturbed, and here there was nothing to disturb her. Not a breath of air, not any motion or noise, was perceptible in the chamber, but *minute drops* from the stalactites, which hung from the ceiling. Immediately above the pedestal, which I have but inadequately described, there descends from the centre of the roof an immense stalactite, trumpet-shaped, sixteen inches in diameter at the larger end, which was attached to the ceiling, and tapering in a beautiful curve nearly to a point. The brilliancy of the gems, which sparkled on every side of us, formed a contrast the most pleasing with the stone-colored altar in the middle of the chamber.

I was so fixed in admiration of what I saw, that I had not time to examine into the philosophy of the phenomenon. That the water oozed through the rock was apparent; and that it flowed more copiously from the centre, than from any other part, was also evident; but how the surplus water was disposed of, I have no recollection.

We had taken off our coats at our entrance into the cave, yet found the heat extremely oppressive. Our guides insisted upon our returning as slowly as possible, that we might be the better able to bear the contrast of the external air, when we should leave the cavern. Notwithstanding our precautions, the open air, which was probably at forty-five degrees of heat, appeared to us like cold water. We covered ourselves as warmly as we could, and returned with our host, the old officer, to dine with him at his castle.

Our dinner was in its arrangement totally unlike any thing I had seen in France, or any where else.

It consisted of a monstrous but excellent wild boar ham; this, and a large savoury pie of different sorts of game, were the principal dishes; which, with some common vegetables, amply satisfied our hunger. A good dessert, and wine of the growth of the neighbouring vineyards, crowned our repast. The blunt hospitality of this rural baron was totally different from that which is to be met with in remote parts of the country of England. It was more the openheartedness of a soldier, than the roughness of a squire. He entertained us with the account of rural sports, to which we were utter strangers.

Hunting the wild boar is a dangerous sport, and partakes more of a warlike exercise, than of a civil amusement. The wild boar, though in general of a small size in this part of the continent, is still fierce; and sometimes, though rarely, an animal of this species, that has grown old and bulky, by having lain hid for a length of time in the forest, is roused from its lair, and opposes the dogs and hunters with formidable resolution. These boars tear up the dogs, as they run past them, with a sudden and oblique motion of their projecting tusks; and frequently wound the hunters themselves, if they cannot elude their course. It seems extraordinary, that such wild animals should still be found in a country so highly civilized as France.

We returned by moonlight to the Chateau de la Poype well pleased with our excursion. The next day we passed in very different society. We accompanied the Marquis and his lady to the residence of a president of Grenoble; the manners here were different from what I had seen at the Chateau de la Poype, and at the houses which I frequented in

Lyons. There was something formal, yet condescending, in the men; and in the ladies that mixture of pretension, pedantry, and affectation, which the French express by the word *précieuse*.

A numerous company was assembled. Among the guests were some mere country gentlemen. These gentlemen were mostly unmarried. Their rusticity was strongly marked, yet, nevertheless, I could perceive, that they were admitted to the rank of country lovers by some of the ladies. This gave them an air of pretension that was disgusting, and in a high degree ridiculous.

Before dinner I received a message from the mistress of the house, who had not appeared with the rest of the family, inviting me to her apartment. My friend, the Marchioness de la Poype, informed me, that this lady, by an unfortunate accident, had been for some years deprived of the use of her limbs, and that to divert her attention from her sufferings, she had applied herself to literature with unremitting assiduity. From the representations of M. de la Poype, she had become desirous to see an English Gentleman, who could converse with her on subjects suited to her taste. I was introduced by Madame de la Poype. In an elegant chamber, ornamented with pictures, and furnished with books, I saw a most beautiful creature of seven or eight and twenty. She was supported by cushions, on a *chaise-longue*, and, were it not for a smile, and the motion of her lips, she might have passed for a figure formed in wax. I saw, though I did not hear, that she spoke; but when I seated myself, as I was desired, on a low seat near her, I found that her voice, though scarcely audible, was articulate and melodious. She did not

move a limb; and in her countenance there seemed to be a constant suppression of the sense of pain. She conversed with animation upon several subjects of literature, and various branches of knowledge, like one who had not, for a long time, had an opportunity of communicating her thoughts to any person engaged in pursuits similar to her own. When dinner was announced, she seemed as if she thought it was too early: and as I departed, she requested, with much timidity, that I would *give up* another hour in the evening. As soon after dinner as I saw the company securely seated at the card table, I returned to the interesting invalide, with whom I passed some hours most agreably. She seemed more free from prejudice and party, than almost any person I have ever met with; fond of reasoning, yet averse from disputation; versed in literature, yet not ambitious to display it. She understood English, and was well acquainted with our best authors, many of whom she appreciated and criticised with much candour and sagacity. I could not help deploring the situation of this superior woman. She made no complaint, though it was obvious, that none of the family in which she lived, had tastes, or knowledge, or sympathy, that could alleviate her sufferings.

This scene made a great impression upon me; an impression that was increased by the recollection of my poor mother, who had been deprived of the use of her limbs at my birth. I was accustomed, in my childhood, to see her cheerful, and sometimes happy; and now I saw this lady forget, or seem to forget, pain and disease, while her mind was occupied with literature. Thus my attention to the acquisition of literature, and knowledge of every kind, as the means

of happiness, independently of their being a distinction, was increased; and I determined on steadily persevering in the cultivation of my understanding.

Upon my return to Lyons, these impressions were strengthened still more by female influence; especially by my becoming acquainted with Mrs. Pitt, afterwards Lady Rivers. She was then far from young, but she was uncommonably agreeable, though so deaf, that, except in a carriage, she could hardly hear what was said at the distance of a yard. I used to drive out with her, evening after evening, on the beautiful banks of the Saone, toward l'Isle de Barbe; and from her various and animated conversation, I learned more of the *interior* of the great world of that day, more anecdotes of distinguished persons, and more knowledge of the human heart, than I could have obtained from any other source within my reach.

The society at Lyons was at this time emulating the polish of Parisian manners, and approaching fast to the dissipation and relaxation of morals, which prevailed in Paris. Among the trifling anecdotes, that have remained in my memory, I may mention a repartee of a belle at Lyons, a Mad^me^ *Bobu*. This lady had given some offence to M. de la Verpilliere, the major of Lyons. At a masquerade the major discovered this lady in her disguise, and accosted her in a sarcastic tone, with a quotation from the syllables of the Primer;—"Comment vous portez vous, Madame Ba-Be-Bi-*Bo-Bu?*"—She answered, "Très bien! Monsieur Ca-Ce-Ci-*Co-Cu*."—A sarcasm, which was not applied at hazard.

A few more slight anecdotes will mark the manners of that day at Lyons, and the good and bad

qualities apparent in the different ranks of society. An English gentleman, who seemed to be very popular among his companions, had brought himself into sudden distress by an unlucky run at play. He was arrested, while he was entertaining several of his countrymen at dinner. Not one of them interfered in his favour; but when he retired from the room, a valet de place, who had lived with him for two years, offered him a purse, containing more than the debt for which he was arrested, telling him, that he had earned that money by the English, and that it could not be better employed, than by saving a gentleman of that country from disgrace. The offer was accepted, and the English gentleman soon afterwards repaid the sum, with the addition of a handsome present.

Another instance of generosity, shewn to an Englishman in distress, occurred while I was at Lyons. A gentleman was arrested for numerous debts, which he had incurred by living in a very extravagant manner with M^lle^ St. Clair, an actress of great celebrity and some beauty. She had fascinated the gentleman so completely, that he had lavished upon her all the money, and had exhausted all the credit, which he could command. Tradesmen to whom he was indebted, becoming acquainted with his situation, found it necessary to enforce payment by securing his person. None of the English came forward to his assistance, and he was actually placed in confinement. He was not, however, left long in this situation; for M^lle^ St. Clair sold all her plate and jewels, and released him. When her lover flew to her, to express his gratitude, he was astonished to find a reception very different from what he expected: after express-

ing in the fondest manner her affection, she declared it to be her fixed determination, to live with him no longer. In vain he pleaded his constancy, his entire devotion to her wishes. She acknowledged all his claims, but steadily refused to continue a connexion, which must necessarily end in his ruin. She had given such a signal proof of her disinterestedness and affection, that no mercenary motive, or any caprice of sentiment, could be attributed to her conduct; she therefore claimed the merit of the greatest sacrifice in giving him up, to preserve him from himself. All the Lyons world applauded her generosity: she was caressed and invited to some of the best houses in that city. I have dined with her at the house of Mad^me^ de la Verpilliere, with a large society of the best company. Had I not known that she was an actress, I could not have discovered her situation by any thing in her manners or conversation.

CHAPTER XII.

About this time a fatal catastrophe, that befel two lovers, made a great noise at Lyons. A young painter, of considerable eminence, came there, in company with a woman of uncommon beauty, who was his mistress. There was something remarkably attractive in both the man and the woman, and their company was sought for with the utmost enthusiasm by all the young men of that city.

The urbanity, liveliness, and good nature of the young painter, were extolled in every company. Both he and the lady sang and played well on several instruments; and, by a variety of other talents, which they exercised without ostentation, they made what is called in France a great *sensation*. Their mutual fondness kept all pretenders to the lady's favour quite at a distance, while it excited a lively interest among their acquaintance.

There was still however something mysterious in their conduct towards each other, that induced an indefinite kind of suspicion. In the midst of gaiety or mirth, a look or a sigh, betrayed a secret anxiety. This anxiety gradually increased, notwithstanding the pains which were taken to conceal it. After some months, the stranger and his mistress invited all their acquaintance to a handsome supper, which they

gave at taking leave of their friends, before their intended departure from Lyons. When they bade farewell, they showed great emotion, and hastily withdrew before their friends departed.

There is, near a convent at Lyons, a place which was called the tomb of the two lovers.—On this spot the bodies of the strangers were found the next morning.—They had shot each other with pistols, the triggers of which were so connected by a red riband, as to go off at the same moment. At first no trace of their history, or motive for their conduct could be discovered; but at length it was ascertained that the man laboured under some incurable disease, to which the physicians had convinced him he must fall a sacrifice within a given period. His mistress had determined to live no longer than her lover: they had therefore converted whatever they possessed into ready money, which they agreed to spend in the manner most congenial to their tastes; and as soon as their funds should be exhausted, which they had calculated would last to the predicted period, when his disease must end his life, they had resolved to destroy themselves. They had projected various means of accomplishing this fatal purpose; poison or drowning had been proposed, and had been rejected, because they could not be certain, that they should both cease to exist at the same moment.

Whoever is acquainted with the state of society in France about this time may form some idea of the interest produced by this extraordinary catastrophe. It was the universal subject of conversation. The young and romantic applauded the heroism of the lovers; the courage and constancy of the woman excited sympathy and enthusiastic applause. In

particular, the disciples of Rousseau shed tears of the tenderest compassion over their grave, while the wise and good expressed abhorrence of the selfish, inhuman conduct of a man, who could so far abuse the confidence reposed in him by his mistress, as to persuade her, or to permit her to persuade herself, that true love could justify deliberate murder. That the man might, from the fear of pain or poverty, be hurried to suicide, does not appear out of the course of common cowardice or folly; but to destroy the object of his love, merely to prevent her from living after he ceased to exist, and to prevent her from loving another, when he could no longer feel either love or jealousy, was justly considered as the basest and most depraved egoism.

The idea of constancy after the death of a beloved object is cherished in society, because it is thought a means of preventing inconstancy during life. The woman, who looks forward without restraint to a second or a third husband, may consequently, perhaps, be less attentive to the declining health of him, with whom she still lives; so far the feeling of posthumous fidelity may be advantageous to society: but this by no means justifies the ferocious sentiment of wishing to sacrifice the object of our affections, lest she should confer happiness upon another.

Scarcely had the interest inspired by this romantic history of the painter and his mistress subsided, when a new *sensation*, of a different sort, was excited at Lyons, by the misconduct, I am sorry to say it, of some of my countrymen. While Captain Jervis* and Captain Goodall of the navy, Mr. Grey†, Lord Win-

* Afterwards Lord St. Vincent.

† Afterwards Lord Grey,—the late Lord Grey.

chelsea, Lord Fortescue, Lord Morton, and his amiable family, who were then all at Lyons, did honour to their country, there were others who gave unfavourable specimens of the manners of Englishmen. Among several instances, of which I was unfortunately a witness, I shall mention but one, which will sufficiently mark the contempt shewed for decorum, and for the persons whose civilities my countrymen condescended to accept.

It was the custom at Lyons, for the principal families to give a ball once a year to their daughters. As young unmarried women were not usually admitted in every day society, this annual ball was always conducted with the most perfect decorum.

Mothers, who were professed coquets at other times, upon this occasion maintained a matronly reserve, and the utmost respect was shewn by all the young men to the innocent objects of the entertainment. The English, resident at Lyons, were usually invited to this ball, and it was generally understood, that great circumspection was necessary in their behaviour.

Lord * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * * was then at Lyons, a *roué*, whose faults were more hurtful to himself than to others; generous, extravagant, dissipated, good natured, and good humoured, he spent his time, and a great deal of the Duke his father's money, in what he thought pleasure. Among others he went to this ball; but he went, unlike others, highly intoxicated. After he had been in the ball-room a short time, he laid himself down upon some chairs, and demonstrated audibly to the company, that he had fallen fast asleep. This was considered by the friends and brothers of the young ladies in the room as an unpardonable affront to the company.

The young men, many of them military, collected together, to determine who should have the lead in turning the offender out of the room. M. de la Verpilliere, son of the late Commandant of Lyons, was a friend to the English: he saw what was going on, and he came to me in great agitation, to acquaint me with the danger, into which Lord * * * * * * had brought himself. I immediately expressed great indignation, walked with M. de la Verpilliere to the place where his drunken Lordship lay, I pulled him roughly by the collar, and when he awakened, I demanded from him immediate satisfaction for the disgrace which he had brought upon his countrymen, and the injury which he had done them, by causing, probably, the exclusion in future of Englishmen from the select parties of the best companies in France. Drunk or sober, his Lordship was always ready to answer such a summons. By the assistance of his friends, he was *got* out of the room: he was not in a situation to fight that night, but he was in a situation to come to me the next morning, to thank me most heartily for my interference. M. de la Verpilliere, the best natured man living, easily pacified the young officers, who had been offended: they perceived, that no affront was intended; and the manner in which I interfered was considered by the French as serviceable to their friends as it was to mine.

I had occasion some time afterwards to draw upon the credit in society, which had been granted me by my French friends in Lyons. It happened, that I went with several of my countrymen to the installation or appointment of the major of Lyons. The assembly was held in the great saloon of the Hotel de Ville, which is, or was, one of the finest rooms in Europe.

It was furnished with some excellent pictures of the former kings of France; some indifferent portraits of Lewis the XVth, and of his family; and several daubs of mayors and aldermen. A speech was made, I believe, by a young advocate, which he prefaced by various genuflexions, and bows, and salutations to the pictures: beginning with the portraits of the younger part of the royal family, he addressed each of them by their full titles, pompously pronounced, and with appropriate compliments; but at length, as he turned toward the portrait of majesty, he suddenly started, put his hands over his eyes, as if they were dazzled by the effulgence of the royal countenance, and bowing, or rather prostrating himself in the rostrum, he again timidly looked towards the bright object of his devotion, and again withdrew his presumptuous gaze, till accustomed to the blaze of glory, he was enabled to pay his tribute of adoration to the royal image. This farce appeared to me so ludicrous, that I fear the relaxation of my muscles gave offence to some of the spectators; for when I went down the great stairs, by which I had ascended, I was stopped in a very rude manner by one of the centinels, who told me, that I could not pass that way. I civilly represented to him, that I had come in by that passage, that I was a stranger, and that I did not know any other way out of the Hotel de Ville.

"What, do you grumble?" said the centinel: "I'll teach you better!" and, seizing me by the fleshy part of the inside of my arm, he grasped it with the most brutal violence. I called for his serjeant; the spectators took my part, and the serjeant, though unwilling, was forced to call his officer, who was the major of what I now found was the *garde bourgeoise*

of the city. With the *bourgeoisie* I had hitherto had no intercourse. The major, instead of expressing any disapprobation of the soldier's conduct, said with great insolence, "the flesh of *vous autres anglois* is so much softer than that of a Frenchman, that you complain of the slightest touch."

I had the prudence to constrain my anger, and only to say, that he might hereafter be convinced of his mistake. Lord Winchelsea, with whom I had but a slight acquaintance, in the most handsome manner immediately offered to go with me to the *commandant* of Lyons, to demand redress. As the commandant, M. de Bellesize, was my friend, I declined Lord Winchelsea's offer; but I requested, that if I had occasion to lay the affair before our ambassador, he would have the goodness to assist me. I went to M. de Bellesize, who expressed much concern at what had happened: with great kindness he referred me to the colonel of the regiment, assuring me that he was a man of honour, from whom I should receive full satisfaction; and he hinted, that the commandant should, in such a case, be applied to only in the last resort. I found from the colonel, M. St. Eloi, the reception which had been promised me; he expressed much indignation, and desired me to meet him in the play-house that evening. I was careful to be there before the play began, and placed myself in the most conspicuous part of the house. Before the overture was finished, I saw Col. St. Eloi and my man appear in the opposite box; and upon a signal to me from the Colonel, I went into the lobby, where there were a number of persons of the highest class in Lyons. M. St. Eloi presented the officer to me, and said, that he was come to ask pardon for the rudeness, with

which he had treated me in the morning. As the man advanced towards me, I perceived, that he could scarcely believe that I was the person whom he had offended, as I was now, according to the fashion of the times, in full dress; and in the morning he had seen me in a frock. He began to speak in great confusion, but I requested, that he would spare himself the trouble, as I considered the circumstance that had happened as extremely advantageous to me, since it had made me acquainted with M. St. Eloi. —So terminated an affair, that might in the hands of a haughty or precipitate officer have ended seriously.

While I was at Lyons, I escaped a dangerous overturn, by having fortunately observed a trivial circumstance, in the manner in which some timber lay on the side of a road. To the south of the city there is, or there was, a very narrow road on a hill, on the banks of the Saone. The banks were so steep and abrupt, as to form quite a precipice; but on this road my coachman, and all those acquainted with the place, were in the habit of driving with perfect security. As he drove me up the hill one morning, I observed some poles, or balks of wood, lying on the edge of the road obliquely, encroaching on it but little; indeed it was so narrow, as to admit of but of little encroachment. The ends of the timber hung over the edge of the precipice. My coachman, proud of his skill, passed these poles dexterously as we went up the hill, as they were inclined from the precipice in the direction of our ascent; but as we returned, it was another affair. It was downhill, and the balks were inclined from the road over the precipice, in the direction in which we were going. I perceived that, as we ascended, the poles, which

were long, bent away from the pressure of the wheels; and that of course as the coachman had kept as close as possible to the bank on the opposite side, the wheels must now get between some of the poles, and if this happened, must, before the horses could be stopped, necessarily be conducted over the edge of the bank. I called to the coachman, who, relying on his skill, and ignorant of the danger, turned a deaf ear to me.—I bawled, and, I am afraid, I swore; but all in vain, he reiterated, "*Allez! allez! ne craignez rien!*" At last, I drew my sword, and passing its glittering blade close to his cheek, uttered with a tremendous voice, "*Arrêtez!*" He pulled up at the very moment when the fore wheel got between the poles. A yard further, we should have been inevitably dashed to pieces. Of the whole party, the coachman was the most frightened, when he perceived how narrowly he had escaped.

I must not omit a circumstance which will shew, that, notwithstanding all the pains I had taken to correct my naturally passionate temper, it was not always as much under my command as it ought to have been. I happened one morning to be present, when a fencing-master had some dispute with Mr. Day, I think about a pair of shoe-buckles. The man was a coxcomb, and impertinent; Mr. Day, not perfectly understanding the French language, did not feel the force of his opponent's expressions, but coolly repeated his own statements. The fencing-master forgot himself yet more; he retorted insolently, and put his hand on his sword, for in those days fencing-masters in France wore swords: I darted forward, seized his sword, broke it in two, kicked him down

stairs, and threw the pieces of the sword after him. For this violence, instead of being reproved by public opinion in Lyons, I was applauded. The fencing-master afterwards most humbly begged pardon. Mr. Day made him a present of a new sword, and he was satisfied.

Upon another occasion, I was riding with a lady near Lyons, when a carter did not immediately make way for us. I called to him—he made some answer unfit to be made before a lady: I gave him a stroke with my whip. I saw him feel in his pocket for his knife, and instantly I knocked him down, left him in the ditch, and we rode on. Upon this occasion I thought my temper had not carried me too far, and that I had done right, and no more than was right. I was much surprised when I went into company in the evening, to find that all my French friends looked coolly upon me. My adventure of the morning was, I guessed, in some way or other, the cause of this. I inquired what was the matter, and with some difficulty I was then informed, that

"I had *failed* towards the lady with whom I had been riding, and towards myself; that I ought to have left the man dead on the spot."

In consideration of my being an Englishman, and ignorant of what French honour required, I was, however pardoned, and reinstated in public opinion.

During all the time which I spent at Lyons, my attention to the works in which I was engaged never remitted. A new channel for the Rhone had now been cut for a considerable distance, and the river was nearly intercepted, when an old boatman warned me, that a tremendous flood might be expected in ten days from the mountains of Savoy. I represented

this to the company, and proposed to employ more men, and to engage, by increased wages, those who were already at work, to continue every day till it was dark. I took care to have my representations entered in the books of the company, but I could not persuade them to a sudden increase of their expenditure. They had laid out a very large sum of money, the time for paying the stipulated percentage on their subscriptions had not arrived, and they preferred a risk which they did not understand, to advancing money on a demand which they had not expected.

At five or six o'clock one morning I was awakened by a prodigious noise on the ramparts under my windows. I sprung out of bed, and saw numbers of people rushing towards the Rhone. I foreboded the disaster! —dressed myself, and hastened to the river.

A crowd was collected on the rampart; through this crowd I had to make my way. I was known, for it had been among all ranks of people a favourite amusement, to go to look at the works which I was carrying on. At this moment, I was let to pass through the opening crowd with every mark of civility; and from all parts I was told with an earnestness, which I can never forget, that nobody blamed me, that it was publicly known that I had foretold the disaster, and that it would not have happened, if my advice had been followed.

When I reached the Rhone, I beheld a tremendous sight! all the work of several weeks, carried on daily by nearly a hundred men, had been swept away. Piles, timber, barrows, tools, and large parts of expensive machinery, were all carried down the torrent, and thrown in broken pieces upon the banks. The principal part of the machinery had been erected upon

an island opposite the rampart. Here there still remained some valuable timber and engines, which might, probably, be saved by immediate exertion. The old boatman, whom I have mentioned before, was at the water-side; I asked him to row me over to the island, that I might give orders how to preserve what remained belonging to the company. My old friend, the boatman, represented to me with great kindness the imminent danger, to which I should expose myself. "Sir," added he, "the best swimmer in Lyons, unless he were one of the *Rhone-men*, could not save himself if the boat overset, and you cannot swim at all."

"Very true," I replied, "but the boat will not overset; and both my duty and my honour require, that I should run every hazard for those, who have put so much trust in me."

My old boatman took me over safely, and left me on the island; but in returning by himself, the poor fellow's little boat was caught by a wave, and it skimmed to the bottom like a slate or an oyster-shell, that is thrown obliquely into the water. A general exclamation was uttered from the shore! but in a few minutes the boatman was seen sitting upon a row of piles in the middle of the river, wringing his long hair with great composure.

I have mentioned this boatman repeatedly as an old man, and such he was to all appearance; his hair was grey, his face wrinkled, his back bent, and all his limbs and features had the appearance of those of a man of sixty, yet his real age was but twenty-seven years. He told me, that he was the oldest boatman on the Rhone; that his younger brothers had been worn out before they were twenty-five years old. Such were the effects of the hardships, to

which they were subject from the nature of their employment. They usually lived six or seven hours a day up to their middle in water, with their heads exposed to the burning sun: but their wages were enormous, and supplied them copiously with brandy.

No stimulus seems to have such mighty power upon the uneducated classes of mankind as spirituous liquors. Fear, hope, ambition, shame, avarice, and even mighty love, give place to the pleasures of inebriation! This is a subject worth the pains of accurate investigation.

After my arrival at the island, I had it in my power to preserve a considerable property belonging to the company, which would have been either carried away by the flood, or pillaged by the populace, had I not interfered. At my return to my apartments, I found a note from M. Bono, a banker of Lyons, requesting to see me immediately. I went to his house, where he was just sitting down to his frugal dinner; he asked me to *take soup* with him; and, when we were alone together, he said to me,

"Sir, by the misfortune which has happened to day, you may possibly be put to some immediate inconvenience for a supply of money; I have a thousand louis d'ors at your service, which you may draw for at sight."

At this time I had good reason to believe, that I was known at Lyons only as a traveller, who had credit for a certain sum on a banker, without any inquiry having been made concerning my property, or my private circumstances. This instance of M. Bono's generosity and confidence made a great impression on my mind: it was a practical lesson against that species of national prejudice, which induces men

to think, that virtue is to be found only in their own country. Whoever is enslaved by prejudice, like every other slave, has lost half his manly worth.

I did not accept of M. Bono's generous offer, because I had no occasion for the money. My services as an engineer had been entirely gratuitous, and I had no connexion whatever with the monied concerns of the company engaged in these public works; therefore the disaster which had happened could not affect me in a pecuniary way. But of this M. Bono was wholly ignorant; he knew nothing of the terms on which I stood with the company, and I might probably, for any thing he could guess to the contrary, have been by this accident reduced to the utmost distress. That it happened to be otherwise, neither diminishes his generosity, nor my grateful sense of the obligation.

The winter now put a stop to our works on the Rhone; but a piece of land had already been gained, and on this site flour-mills were to be built. On the profit of these mills the company chiefly depended for reimbursement of the large funds, which they had laid out. During the winter, I employed myself in drawing plans, and trying experiments, preparatory to building flour-mills. But I was not to carry any of these designs into execution.

I mentioned, that Mrs. Edgeworth had returned to England to be confined. In the month of March, I heard that she was brought to bed of a daughter (my daughter Anna). A few days afterwards I received a letter with an account of my wife's death, and I was obliged immediately to return to England.

I had finished an essay on the subject of mills, and as it was ready to be presented to the company, I

sent it to them with a letter, stating the necessity of my departure. In a very handsome manner they sent me a deed conferring upon me a lot of ground, in the new town, which we had won from the ancient conflux of the Rhone and Saone. M. Rigaud de Terrebasse was my trustee: the laws of France at that time preventing foreigners from enjoying this species of property. But the revolution has swept away the family of Terrebasse, and the remembrance of me and my services.

I pursued my journey, taking my little boy with me: we travelled through Burgundy to Paris. The country revived my health, which had suffered much by my assiduous attendance upon the works on the Rhone the preceding summer. I staid a short time at Paris, where M. de Bellesize was then Prévôt des Marchands. He had been removed from Lyons to that important post, upon account of his superior merit. He shewed me great civility, and offered to procure for me the ribbon of the order of St. Michael. This order had been established, I believe, by Lewis the Fourteenth: at first it had been bestowed only on merit. It had degenerated, however, like every thing else under the reigns of the mistresses of Lewis the Fifteenth; and though it still retained its credit as to foreigners, I declined accepting it.

CHAPTER XIII.

A NEW æra in my life was now beginning. When I arrived in London, I found a letter from my steady friend, Mr. Day, promising that he would immediately come from a remote part of England to meet me. I appointed the place of our meeting at Woodstock, where I could breathe the fresh air of Blenheim, while I waited for his arrival.

The first words he said to me were,

"Have you heard any thing of Honora Sneyd?"

I assured him, that I had heard nothing, but what he had told me when he was in France. That she had some disease in her eyes, and that it was feared she would lose her sight; I added, that I was resolved to offer her my hand, even if she had undergone such a dreadful privation.

"My dear friend," said he, "while virtue and honor forbade you to think of her, I did every thing in my power to separate you; but now that you are both at liberty, I have used the utmost expedition to reach you on your arrival in England, that I might be the first to tell you, that Honora is in perfect health and beauty; improved in person and in mind, and, though surrounded by lovers, still her own mistress."

At this moment I enjoyed the invaluable reward of my steady adherence to the resolution, which I had formed on leaving England, never to keep up the slightest intercourse with her by letter, message, or inquiry.—I enjoyed also the proof my friend gave me of his generous affection. Mr. Day had now come several hundred miles for the sole purpose of telling me of the fair prospects before me; and this proof of his friendship, and of his being absolutely incapable of envy or jealousy, was shewn at a moment, when he, from some trifling cause, thought he had reason to complain of my having neglected him. I went directly to Lichfield, to Dr. Darwin's. The Doctor was absent, but his sister, an elderly maiden lady, who then kept house for him, received me kindly.

"You will excuse me," said the good lady, "for not making tea for you this evening, as I am engaged to the Miss Sneyds; but perhaps you will accompany me, as I am sure you will be welcome."

Pardon me, benevolent reader, if I dwell, for half a page, upon a subject which can but little interest any human creature except myself; we all of us acknowledge, that love "has been, or ought to be, our master."

It was summer.—We found the drawing-room at Mr. Sneyd's filled by all my former acquaintances and friends, who had, without concert among themselves, assembled as if to witness the meeting of two persons, whose sentiments could scarcely be known even to the parties themselves.

I have been told, that the last person whom I addressed or saw, when I came into the room, was Honora Sneyd. This I do not remember; but I am

perfectly sure, that, when I did see her, she appeared to me most lovely, even more lovely than when we parted. What her sentiments might be, it was impossible to divine.

My addresses were, after some time, permitted and approved; and, with the consent of her father, Miss Honora Sneyd and I were married (1773) by special license, in the ladies' choir, in the Cathedral at Lichfield. Mr. Seward, under whose care (which had been the care of a parent) Honora had been brought up, married us. The good old man shed tears of joy, while he pronounced the nuptial benediction. Mrs. Seward shewed us every possible mark of tenderness and affection; and Miss Seward, notwithstanding some imaginary cause of dissatisfaction which she felt about a bridesmaid, was, I believe, really glad to see Honora united to a man, whom she had often said she thought peculiarly suited to her friend in taste and disposition. Immediately after the marriage ceremony we left Lichfield, and went to Ireland.

Note by the Editor.

I cannot forbear inserting Mr. Day's letter of congratulation on my father's marriage:—

August.

"I am afraid, my dear friend, you have thought that my congratulations were slow on their journey to Ireland; and that I might, long ere this, have sent you an epithalamium in heroics; but excuse my indolence, an indolence I pardon myself, because I had nothing particular to say, and have been in continual motion. I now send you the sincerest wishes, that you may, in this marriage, continue to find every good and comfort you expect; and this is as much as friendship can wish, and more than, according to the

common fate of men, will be your share. Be happy, my dear friend, since you possess every thing which your own mind suggests to you as a means of happiness: more you cannot have. You possess an understanding improved by observation, goodness of temper, and a variety of literary tastes. Whatever my friendship may be able to contribute to your happiness, you know you may command. I am arrived at that period of life, when, in a reflective mind, its sentiments are not easily changed; and if my present aversion to all engagements, which gradually involve the mind in low pursuits, continue, still more it may be presumed, that nothing will ever happen to destroy the strong desire I feel, both from reason and nature, to discharge with propriety all the duties of a man. But you must consider, that, though our affection remain as strong as ever, our habitual intercourse must necessarily be diminished. When you experienced vexations, you sought a comforter in me, and I hope sometimes succeeded: to me you entrusted your uneasiness, your hopes, your fears, your passions. Young and inexperienced in the world, I was capable of being of little use to you, except by fidelity and discretion. To you, when my hopes were more active, and life a novelty, I entrusted all the fantastic emotions of my own heart—schemes of happiness, which a young man conceives with enthusiasm, pursues with ardor, and sees dissipated for ever, as he advances. You heard me with kindness—sometimes repressed, sometimes excited me: in general advised me well, and never deceived my expectations or my confidence. For all which accept the *desire* I have always had to serve you for the *deed*, and receive my thanks—not as a vain acknowledgment, but as a testimony that I am contented with the past.

"You must perceive, that the tendency I have to stoicism, joined with the change of your circumstances, and your acquisition of an amiable friend in a wife, must necessarily make us of less active importance to each other. You two will be settled in one spot, while I am roving about the habitable earth, not in pursuit of happiness, but to avoid ennui. These circumstances will necessarily prevent, at least for some time, the continuance of our intimacy upon the same terms as formerly.

"Helvetius, always systematizing, affirms, that all friendship is founded upon our wants alone; and that, as these cease, or are satisfied, we gradually forget our friends; but if I may judge from my own heart, as well as he from his, there is a certain, stable,

dispassionate affection, which may subsist even in years of absence —a tender remembrance of those we have loved, even had we lost the hope of ever seeing them again: an attention to their happiness, were we assured they could never be informed of it. It is therefore in absence, that we form the most accurate judgments of our own hearts; that we separate the local, accidental, temporary affection, from that which is of a stable nature; and this is that affection, which I hope you will retain for me, and which I shall, if I can speak of any future event with certainty, always be sensible of for you. As I know not your present scheme of life, and only know of my own, that I do not at present intend to settle any where, I think it may be some time before we meet again. Whenever we meet, I can receive no greater pleasure, than to see you happy in your wife, your children, and, above all, in yourself.

"As to myself, I can, I think, give no better picture of my own mind, than what I wrote to you last winter from France: an indifference to all human affairs, an aversion to restraint, and engagement, and embarrassment, continue to increase in my mind; so that there is great probability I am marked out by fate for an old bachelor, and an humourist, destined, perhaps to become very old, because I am very indifferent about the matter, and to buy hobby-horses for your grandchildren; and, perhaps, as an old friend to the family, admitted to mediate for some of the future Miss Edgeworths, when they run away with a tall ensign in the guards, or their dancing master!

"When I consider your situation in life, I think it probable, with proper attention to your affairs, that, though you have acted precipitately, you have chosen the most eligible manner of living.

"Doctor Small, with whom I now am, has shewn me part of a letter that he has received from you, which gives me real pleasure; nor have I any doubt that the lady, with whom you are now connected, will never give you more uneasiness, should her health continue good, than she has done this first month of your connexion. From her I expect to see how a sensible and affectionate woman should behave to her husband, her husband's children, and her own (no easy task); as in you I hope to find the example of a husband's discretion with a lover's tenderness. With what pleasure shall I, when I meet you again, contemplate that happiness, which

you say you so fully possess! such sights are sometimes necessary to reconcile me to the mass of misery I see around me.

"Pray, to Mrs. Edgeworth say from me every thing, that may best express the real friendship and esteem I have for her, and the conviction, that, so far from being any obstacle to our future friendship, she will always entertain for me such sentiments, as I deserve from my behaviour to her husband.

"Adieu.

"T. D."

CHAPTER XIV.

On our arrival at our home at Edgeworth-Town, we found that much was necessary to be done.

We had a tolerable house, built according to the taste of the foregoing half century, when architecture had not been much studied in Ireland. The grounds and gardens were in a style correspondent to the architecture; the people were in a wretched state of idleness and ignorance: so that we had sufficient business to occupy the whole of our thoughts for some months. My wife applied herself instantly to the various occupations which surrounded her. We had brought with us some English servants, who soon put our domestic economy upon a comfortable footing. The axe and the plough were presently at work. The yew hedges, and skreens of clipped elms and horn-beam, were cut down to let in the air, and the view of green fields. Carpenters and masons pulled down and built up.

As to the people, we perceived, that, by kindness and attention to their wants and prejudices, it would be in our power to meliorate the condition, and to improve the disposition of the poor in our neighbourhood. Few gentry lived near us; fortunately the few, who were within our reach, were friends and

relations. But we did not at this time feel the want of society.

A trifling circumstance happened soon after we were married which the reader will smile at my recording. But "If trifles light as air are to the jealous confirmations strong," they have also as powerful an effect as proofs of affection. Mrs. Edgeworth one day missed her wedding ring. The emotion which she shewed at this slight accident, an emotion so foreign to her usual habits of mind, and the eagerness, and anxiety, yet the presence of mind, with which she instantly pursued the best means to find this ring, were proofs of attachment, which I might scarcely be pardoned for mentioning at this period of my life, except as they are connected with a circumstance, that happened several years afterwards.

The moment she perceived, that the ring was not on her finger, she started up from dinner, and went to the place where she had been standing during most part of the morning, and where thirty or forty laborers were employed levelling a piece of ground. She desired them to stop, and to range themselves in one line. She then, promising them a considerable reward if they found her ring, desired them to walk regularly one after another, as slowly as possible, across the field, without separating, lest they should tread the ring into the fresh ground. She obliged them to sift all the newly turned earth, stood by, and examined each sieve-full herself. The ring was found, and Honora vowed, that *she never would lose it again but with her life.*

During the first years of our marriage we were much alone; and as we were both fond of a country

life, and of each other, we felt too well contented in retirement. I say this, because it is a fault in which young people, who have loved one another with strong passion, are apt to indulge; they are inclined to seclusion, and think that two real lovers are all-sufficient to each other. That we did enjoy great and *untired* felicity is certain; but at the same time I acknowledge, that for three or four years we did not improve our understandings, or enlarge our views of life, as we should have done, had we lived in a more extended society. In another point of view, it may be observed that the retired domestic manner in which we passed our time, kept dormant the seeds of ambition, which might probably have sprung up in my mind, if I had frequented the capital, where I had many contemporaries eager in the race of parliamentary distinction, to whom I felt that I was not absolutely inferior.

After having resided three years in Ireland, we determined to pay a visit to our friends in England. We certainly found a considerable change for the better, as to comfort, convenience, and conversation, among our English acquaintance. So much so, that we were induced to remain in England.

We took a house in Hertfordshire, at North Church, near Great Berkhampstead. The house was small, but uncommonly neat and cheerful. Here we resolved to pass two or three years in retirement; to cultivate our tastes for literature, and to give me leisure to pursue my propensity for mechanics. As we were within five and twenty miles of town, we had hopes, that I should be able to renew and sustain my acquaintance with those men of science

and literature, with whom I had formerly been intimate.

Mr. Day continued to keep up a strict intimacy with my family; he paid us frequent visits in our retirement. He had purchased chambers in the Temple, where he spent a considerable portion of his time, and whence he made excursions to different parts of England.

His attachment to Miss Elizabeth Sneyd had long since terminated unsuccessfully. Upon his return from France, that lady found, that, notwithstanding all the exertions he had made, and the pains he had taken to improve his manners and person, she could not feel for him the sort of attachment, which was necessary for her happiness and for his in marriage. In short, notwithstanding his great and good qualities, she could not give him her heart. This disappointment affected him much at the moment; but time produced its usual effect. In the course of four or five years his heart had been again at liberty—and again engaged. His fate in marriage was at last decided by his friend Dr. Small.

I have said, that Mr. Day was the man of the most perfect morality, whom I have ever known. Dr. Small was in this respect scarcely his inferior, and he was far his superior in knowledge of the world, in experience, true philosophy, and suavity of manners. He had acquired over most of those who were intimate with him an indescribable ascendance: over the mind of Mr. Day his influence was paramount to that of any other individual, and it was used solely for his friend's advantage. As marriage was the grand object of Mr. Day's consideration,

Dr. Small was constantly interested upon this subject. He never saw any woman, whose character and situation in life appeared suitable to Mr. Day, without mentioning her to him, and endeavouring to give him an opportunity of judging for himself. The Doctor accidentally became acquainted with Miss Milnes, of Wakefield, in Yorkshire; and, soon after he had seen her, he told me, that he believed he had at last found a lady perfectly suited to Mr. Day; a woman, who was capable of appreciating his merit, and of treating the small defects in his appearance and manners as trifles beneath her serious consideration.

But the Doctor did not hastily communicate his sentiments to his friend, for Mr. Day had by this time become attached to Sabrina. She had now grown up, and no longer a child, was entitled by her manners and appearance to the appellation of a young lady. Mr. Day took great pains to cultivate her understanding, and still more to mould her mind and disposition to his own views and pursuits. His letters to me at this period were full of little anecdotes of her progress, temper, and conduct: I had not formerly thought, that she was sufficiently cultivated, or of a sufficiently vigorous understanding, to be his companion. I knew also, that whoever should become the wife of Mr. Day must be content to live in perfect retirement; to give up her tastes to his; to discuss every subject of every day's occurrence with logical accuracy; to be totally indifferent to all the luxuries, and to some of the comforts of opulent life. To balance these sacrifices she would find herself united to a man of undeviating morality, sound sense, much knowledge, and much celebrity; a companion never deficient in agreeable or instructive conversa-

tion, of unbounded generosity, of great good-nature; a philanthropist in the most extensive, and the most exalted sense of the word: in short, a man who would put it in her power to do good to every body beneath her, provided she could scorn the silly fashions of those above her. Sabrina was, as to many of these circumstances, well suited to Mr. Day; but she was too young and too artless, to feel the extent of that importance, which my friend annexed to trifling concessions or resistance to fashion, particularly with respect to female dress. He certainly was never more loved by any woman, than he was by Sabrina; and I do not think, that he was insensible to the preference, with which she treated him; nor do I believe, that any woman was to him ever personally more agreeable.

From his letters at this time I was persuaded, that he would marry her immediately; but a very trifling circumstance changed his intention. He had left Sabrina at the house of a friend, under strict injunctions as to some peculiar fancies of his own; in particular, some restrictions as to her dress. She neglected, forgot, or undervalued something, which was not, I believe, clearly defined. She did, or she did not, wear certain long sleeves, and some handkerchief, which had been the subject of his dislike, or of his liking; and he, considering this circumstance as a criterion of her attachment, and as a proof of her want of strength of mind, quitted her for ever! The circumstances of this singular transaction and determination I learned from the gentleman, at whose house they happened. Mr. Day, at the moment, wrote me a letter explaining to me the feelings and reasoning, which decided him to give up, from a

motive apparently so trifling, a scheme upon which he had bestowed so much time and labour; a scheme which he had recurred to after every disappointment; and which, at last, from the surprising improvement that hope had wrought in Sabrina's mind and manners, promised him a companion, peculiarly pleasing to him in her person, devoted to him by gratitude and habit, and, I believe, by affection. Mr. Day's reasons for breaking off his attachment proved to my understanding, that, with his peculiarities, he judged well for his own happiness; but I felt, that, in the same situation, I could not have acted as he had done.

When Mr. Day's friends were convinced that he would never again resume his connexion with Sabrina, Doctor Small by decrees opened his views relative to Miss Milnes. The unbounded charity and benevolence of this lady were so well known in Yorkshire, and were so much talked of, that it needed but little inquiry to be certain of the facts. Several of her letters had been seen, which evinced the superiority of her understanding. This was so generally admitted among her acquaintance, that to distinguish her from another Miss Milnes, a relation of hers, celebrated for beauty, who had, I believe, been called Venus, she had acquired the name of Minerva. All this Doctor Small reported to Mr. Day.

"But has she white and large arms?" said Mr. Day.

"She has," replied Dr. Small.

"Does she wear long petticoats?"

"Uncommonly long."

"I hope she is tall, and strong, and healthy."

"Remarkably little, and not robust.—My good

friend," added Dr. Small, speaking in his leisurely manner, "Can you possibly expect, that a woman of charming temper, benevolent mind, and cultivated understanding, with a distinguished character, with views of life congenial with your own, with an agreeable person and a large fortune, should be formed exactly according to a picture that exists in your imagination? This lady is two or three and twenty, has had twenty admirers; some of them admirers of herself, some, perhaps, of her fortune; yet, in spite of all these admirers and lovers, she is disengaged. If you are not satisfied, determine at once never to marry."

"My dear Doctor," replied Mr. Day, "the only serious objection which I have to Miss Milnes, is her large fortune. It was always my wish, to give to any woman whom I married the most unequivocal proof of my attachment to herself, by despising her fortune."

"Well, my friend," said the Doctor, "what prevents you from despising the fortune, and taking the lady?"

Mr. Day soon went into Yorkshire, was charmed with Miss Milnes, and began a courtship, which any other man would have concluded in a few months; for the lady not only approved, but admired the noble and disinterested character of her lover, and he was equally pleased with her generous and romantic disposition. When I say *romantic*, I do not mean that species of romance, which fills the pages of a novel; but that romantic forgetfulness of *self*, which is seldom found in real life, and which had appeared in every part of the conduct of Miss Milnes from her childhood. With Mr. Day there were a thousand small preliminaries to be adjusted: not content with that influence,

which his merit and his superior understanding must necessarily obtain, there was no subject of opinion or speculation, which he did not, previously to his marriage, discuss with his intended bride. She was not only a woman of abilities, but she was conversant with literature, and particularly with poetry, which she read with much energy; besides, she was really mistress of the English language, and she spoke with great eloquence. Between a lady so accomplished, and such a dialectician as Mr. Day, it was not likely, that conversation should languish. In fact, I believe, that few lovers ever conversed or corresponded more, than did my friend and Miss Milnes. At length they were married, and their fortunes were mutually settled upon the survivor in case they had no children.

To prevent all temptation of being drawn into the usual modes of life followed by people in his situation, they retired to a small lodging at Hampstead, where he determined to reside, till he should find a house suited to his taste.

Shortly after their marriage, he brought Mrs. Day to Northchurch to see us. Her person and conversation were pleasing, and the noble and generous sentiments which she expressed, and the conformity of all her conduct to these sentiments, entitled her to more than common admiration and respect. Mrs. Edgeworth had been well accustomed to Mr. Day's habits of discussion and declamation: she observed that Mrs. Day's replies, replete with sense and spirit, were always delivered in chosen language, and with appropriate emphasis. My friend proceeded towards his conclusions with unerring logic, and inflexible perseverance; but Mrs. Day's eloquence won the hearers, at least for a time, to her opinions.

Mrs. Honora Edgeworth's conversation was in a medium between both styles; she never harangued, but she spoke with ease, and yet with much precision, so that in summing up the arguments on both sides, she generally gave a sound judgment.

Notwithstanding the dryness of political and metaphysical subjects, which were usually those upon which we descanted, I was amused and instructed, and I wished most heartily to prevail upon Mr. Day to settle in my neighbourhood in Hertfordshire; but he had an insurmountable objection to any situation near his former friends, lest, as I suppose, any opinions contrary to his system of connubial happiness might be supported before his wife. He remained some time at Hampstead, being in no great haste to purchase a house; as he thought, that by living in inconvenient lodgings, where he was not known, and consequently not visited by any body except his chosen few, he should accustom his bride to those modes of life, which he conceived to be essential to his happiness.

My wife and I went to see the new married couple at Hampstead. It was the depth of winter; the ground was covered with snow, and to our great surprise, we found Mrs. Day walking with her husband on the heath, wrapped up in a frieze cloak, and her feet well fortified with thick shoes. We had always heard that Mrs. Day was particularly delicate; but now she gloried in rude health, or rather was proud of having followed her husband's advice about her health; advice, which was in this respect undoubtedly excellent.

I never saw any woman so entirely intent upon accommodating herself to the sentiments, and wishes,

and will of a husband. Notwithstanding this disposition, there still was a never-failing flow of discussion between them. From the deepest political investigation, to the most frivolous circumstance of daily life, Mr. Day found something to descant upon ; and Mrs. Day was nothing loth to support upon every subject an opinion of her own : thus combining, in an unusual manner, independence of sentiment, and the most complete matrimonial obedience. In all this there may be something, at which even a friend might smile ; but in the whole of their conduct there was nothing, which the most malignant enemy could condemn.

Mr. Day afterwards bought a house, and a small estate, called Stapleford-Abbot, near Abridge, in Essex. The house was indifferent, and the land worse ; the one he proposed to enlarge, the other to improve, according to the best and latest systems of agriculture. The house was of brick, with but one good room, and it was but ill adapted in other respects to the residence of a family. He built, at a considerable expense, convenient offices ; also a small addition to the house.

When Mr. Day determined to dip his unsullied hands in mortar, he bought at a stall " *Ware's Architecture ;*" this he read with persevering assiduity for three or four weeks, before he began his operations. He had not however followed this new occupation a week, before he became tired of it, as it completely deranged his habits of discussion with Mrs. Day in their daily walks in the fields, or prevented their close application to books when in the house. Masons calling for supplies of various sorts, which had not been suggested in the great body of architecture,

that he had procured with so much care, annoyed the young builder exceedingly. Sills, lintels, door and window cases, were wanting before they had been thought of; and the carpenter, to whose presence he had looked forward, but at a distant period, was now summoned and hastily set to work, to keep the masons a going. Mr. Day was deep in a treatise, written by some French agriculturist, to prove, that any soil may be rendered fertile by sufficient ploughing, when the masons desired to know, where he would have the window of the new room on the first floor. I was present at the question, and offered to assist my friend—No—he sat immoveable in his chair, and gravely demanded of the mason, whether the wall might not be built first, and a place for the window cut out afterwards. The mason stared at Mr. Day with an expression of the most unfeigned surprise. "Why, Sir, to be sure, it is very possible; but, I believe, Sir, it is more common to put in the window cases while the house is building, and not afterwards."

Mr. Day, however, with great coolness, ordered the wall to be built without any opening for windows, which was done accordingly; and the addition, which was made to the house, was actually finished, leaving the room, which was intended for a dressing-room for Mrs. Day, without any window whatsoever. When it was sufficiently dry, the room was papered, and for some time candles were lighted in it whenever it was used. So it remained for two or three years; afterward Mrs. Day used it as a lumber room, and at last the house was sold without any window having been opened in this apartment.

This strange neglect arose from two causes, from Mr. Day's bodily indolence and mental activity; he did not like to get up from his chair to give orders upon a subject, on which he was but little interested, and he felt strongly intent upon the speculation which then occupied his mind.

Some years after his marriage he bought another house and estate, Anningsley, near Chertsey, in Surrey; to which he removed. He told me, that he had well considered the purchase, and that he thought he had acted prudently in buying one of the most unprofitable farms in England, because he had a large scope of ground for a small sum of money. Here he tried, upon a great scale, several of those doubtful processes, which he had found in foreign and domestic books of agriculture, to the no small injury of his fortune: and here he finally settled, at a distance from us, so that we saw him only at long intervals. Whenever he visited us, however, we observed, that he seemed to relax from his usual dialectics, and to let things and persons pass before him unanalysed, and without dissection.

Having thus endeavoured to sketch Mr. Day's character, I feel almost as if I had done an injury, as if I had betrayed some confidence, and added another to the many instances of those, who, by the opportunities of friendship, had acquired the means of injuring a friend. But, upon reflection, I am acquitted in my own judgment from any unkindness towards him or his. He had been long dead when this was written; he left behind him no children, nor any near connexions; all our common friends outlived him but a short time, and when this comes before the public I shall myself be no more. In relating these cir-

cumstances, it could not be my intention to throw any ridicule upon my friend, or upon the excellent qualities which he displayed in every situation, and at every period of his life; but simply to draw a character which might be useful to others, to shew that *ne quid nimis* (too much of one thing is good for nothing) is a judicious adage—that there may be too strong an adherence even to reason; and that discussion upon all the minute affairs of life, and of every day occurrence, may become as inconvenient and prejudicial, as the contrary extreme of careless and hasty decision.

I was not disappointed in my hopes, that during a residence at Northchurch I should renew my acquaintance and habits of intimacy with some of my former literary and scientific friends in London. My mind was kept up to the current of speculation and discovery in the world of science, and continual hints for reflection and invention were suggested to me.

By some circumstance, which I cannot now remember, my attention was about this period turned to clockwork, and I invented several pieces of mechanism for measuring time. These, with the assistance of a good workman in the neighbourhood, I executed successfully. I then (in 1776) finished a clock* on a new construction. Its accuracy was tried at the observatory at Oxford, by my friend Dr. Hornsby, who made me a favourable report of its performance. It has been ever since, and is now (in 1809) going well at my house in Ireland.

My wife had an eager desire for knowledge of all sorts, and, perhaps to please me, became an excellent

* A drawing and description of this clock will hereafter be published.—*Note by Editor.*

theoretick mechanic. Mechanical amusements occupied my mornings, and I dedicated my evenings to the best books upon various subjects. I strenuously endeavoured to improve my own understanding, and to communicate whatever I knew to my wife. Indeed while we read and conversed together, during the long winter evenings, the clearness of her judgment assisted me in every pursuit of literature in which I was engaged; as her understanding had arrived at maturity, before she had acquired any strong prejudices on historical subjects, she derived uncommon advantage from books.

We had frequent visitors from Town; and as our acquaintance were people of literature and science, conversation with them exercised and arranged her thoughts, upon whatever subject they were employed. Nor did we neglect the education of our children: Honora had under her care, at this time, two children of her own, and three of mine by my former marriage.

Unfortunately for my eldest son, I was persuaded by my friends to send him away from me to school, without having sufficiently prepared him for the change between the Rousseau system, which had been pursued at home, and the course of education to which he was to be subject at a public seminary. His strength, agility, good humour, and enterprise, made him a great favourite with his school-fellows; he shewed abilities, and was sure to succeed whenever he applied; but his application was not regular, nor was his mind turned to scholarship. He had acquired a vague notion of the happiness of a seafaring life, and I found it better to comply with his wishes, than to strive against the stream. He went

to sea, readily acquired the knowledge requisite for his situation, and his hardihood and fearlessness of danger appeared to fit him for a sailor's life.*

For some years we continued to pass our time at Northchurch, in the manner I have described, rationally, and therefore happily.

No events of any importance happened. Some slight incidents, however, which occurred to me in my walks through London, remain, after years have elapsed, fresh in my recollection; and yet they are totally unconnected with my own interests or history.

One day, in one of the crowded streets, I met a poor young girl, who seemed utterly bewildered; she stopped me, to ask if I would tell her the name of the street she was in. Her accent was broad Scotch, and her look and air of perfect simplicity was, I perceived, not assumed, but genuine. I gave her the information she wanted, and asked her where she lived, and if she was in search of any friend's house. She said she did not live any where in London; she was but just arrived from Scotland, and knew nobody who had any house or lodging of their own in Town, but she was looking for a friend of the name of Peggy; and Peggy was a Scotch girl, who was born within a mile of the place where she lived in Scotland. Peggy was in service in London, and had written her direction to some house in this street, but the number of the house, and the names of the master or

* He some years afterwards went to America, married Elizabeth Knight, an American lady, and settled in South Carolina, near George Town. He died (August 1796) leaving three sons, who, with their mother, are still resident in America.—*Note by the Editor.*

mistress, had been forgotten. The poor girl was determined, she said, to try every house, for she had come all the way from Scotland to see *Peggy*, and she had no other dependence!

It seemed a hopeless case. I was so much struck with her simplicity and forlorn condition, that I could not leave her in this perplexity, an utter stranger as she evidently was to the dangers of London. I went with her, though I own without the slightest hope of her succeeding in the object of her search; knocked at every door, and made inquiries at every house. When we came near the end of the street, she was in despair, and cried bitterly; but as one of the last doors opened and as a footman was surlily beginning to answer my questions, she darted past him, exclaiming, "There's Peggy!" — She flew along the passage to a servant girl, whose head had just appeared as she was coming up stairs. I never heard or saw stronger expressions of joy and affection than at this meeting: and I scarcely ever, for any service I have been able in the course of my life to do for my fellow-creatures, received such grateful thanks as I did from this poor Scotch lassy and her Peggy for the little assistance I afforded her.

Another time, about this period, one evening in summer, I happened to be in one of those streets that lead from the Strand toward the river. It was a street to which there was no outlet, and consequently free from passengers. A Savoyard was grinding his disregarded organ; a dark shade fell obliquely across the street, and there was a melancholy produced by the surrounding circumstances, that excited my attention. A female beggar suddenly rose from the steps of one of the doors, and began to dance ludicrously

to the tune which the Savoyard was playing. I gave the man some money, and I observed, that, for such an old woman, the mendicant danced with great sprightliness. She looked at me stedfastly, and, sighing, added, that she could once dance well. She desired the Savoyard to play a minuet, the steps of which she began to dance with uncommon grace and dignity. I spoke to her in French, in which language she replied fluently, and in a good accent; her language, and a knowledge of persons in high life, and of books, which she shewed in the course of a few minutes' conversation, convinced me that she must have had a liberal education, and that she had been amongst the higher classes of society. Upon inquiry, she told me, that she was of a noble family, whose name she would not injure by telling her own: that she had early disgraced herself, and that, falling from bad to worse, she had sunk to her present miserable condition. I asked her why she did not endeavour to get into some of those asylums which the humanity of the English nation has provided for want and wretchedness; she replied, with a countenance of resolute despair,

"You can do nothing more for me than to give me half a crown:—it will make me drunk, and pay for my bed!"

I will not detain the reader with more of my recollections of such anecdotes, as have probably occurred to most men who have walked much in the streets of London.

CHAPTER XV.

In the midst of the domestic happiness which we enjoyed at this period, I was called away to attend a lawsuit in Ireland. It was a plain and simple case; but it had been so managed by my lawyers, that it became sufficiently complicated, and of course it was vexatiously protracted. My wife could not, with tolerable convenience, accompany me. This was the first time Honora and I had been separated since our marriage; a separation extremely painful to us both!

My lawsuit prospered from the moment I landed in Ireland; and in less than two months I had obtained a verdict at the expense of one half the value of the fee-simple of my land. I found, that my estate had not been improved during my absence; and that Ireland, and its inhabitants, appeared to less advantage to me, than at any other time when I had been there. At this period, from various causes, the rent of land had fallen, and there was less excitement to industry than formerly. I thought it necessary to remain at Edgeworth-Town, to improve my estate, and thus to sacrifice my tastes to my duty. I had always thought, that, if it were in the power of any man to serve the country which gave him bread, he ought to sacrifice every inferior consideration, and to

reside where he could be most useful. I expressed these sentiments in my letters to Honora; she approved of my plan, and she immediately took measures for letting our house at Northchurch, and for coming over to join me in Ireland.

Note by the Editor.

When Mrs. Honora Edgeworth was preparing to leave England, she received a letter from Mr. Day, which ought to be preserved as a proof, that he, who on some occasions disdained the forms of polished life, could, when prompted by generous friendship, and the real tenderness of his nature, write with perfect politeness.

" MY DEAR MADAM,

" I have no message to send to Mr. Edgeworth, except my most affectionate remembrance, and my best hopes, that whatever he may decide upon may prove as much for his happiness, as I am sure it will for his honour. I am too sensible of your mutual affection, to wish you longer divided; though I should rejoice if the meeting could be in England, which would, I think, be upon many accounts more eligible. However, you are best able to decide for yourself. I will only detain you, to beg that, if you go, you will, upon the account of all your friends, (and more than all put together, of Mr. Edgeworth,) favour the delicate health which you have at present. The greater part of ladies would little need this caution. But it is no compliment from me to say, that you are one of the few women, who, in the discharge of any duty, are rather liable to attempt too much, than to venture too little.

" May you arrive safe in Ireland, and long remain the joy and pride of him, whose lively affection and tenderness, joined to so many other virtues, render him most deserving of so great a good.

" I am, with all respect, esteem, and friendship,

" Dear Madam,

" Your friend and humble servant,

" THOMAS DAY."

" *London, Wednesday Night.*"

But, alas! in the midst of her preparation for this journey, Honora's health began to fail. She always attributed the beginning of her illness to a cold she caught one day, when, after a walk to the post-office, she sat down under a tree to rest herself, when she was fatigued and too warm. She was seized with a slight fever, and confined to her bed. Her letters told me the exact truth. Truth is, in such circumstances, better than all the arts of concealment and palliation. The physician, who attended her, was not apprehensive of any danger; and as she had in general enjoyed good health during our marriage, I flattered myself he was right. However, I determined to go to her, and immediately went to Dublin; but, just as I was going to embark in the packet, the wind became directly adverse.

Every post brought me letters promising her speedy recovery; yet the anxiety and impatience, which I experienced, were beyond all bounds. I sat, hour after hour, with my eyes fixed upon a weathercock, watching its slightest motions. Day after day the wind continued in the same point; no vessel of any sort could sail. It was moonlight, and whenever I wakened, I got up to look whether the wind had changed. For more than a week I was thus kept in suspense. I almost thought, that I could walk upon the sea. If a row-boat could have been procured, I should not have hesitated to attempt a passage. I had felt the violence of love before marriage, but I assure my reader, that I felt it more strongly after I had been married six years. And, looking back to my past life, I can assert, that the greatest torment my mind ever endured was at this period; and the most ardent and exquisite pleasure I ever enjoyed

was on meeting my wife on the road, near Daventry. I found her weak, flushed, feverish, but still the same Honora; the same prudence, the same strength of mind appeared in whatever she said. In a few minutes we determined, as my house was let for a year, to proceed to Lichfield to Mr. Sneyd's, (my father in law,) till we could decide on our future plans.

Here I consulted my friend, Doctor Darwin, from whose manner I soon perceived, that he thought Honora's illness more serious than I had in the least suspected. I found, that he thought she had a tendency to consumption, a disease from which she had escaped at fifteen. He advised me not to take her to Ireland, but to find some place near Lichfield, where she might have his friendly assistance. Mr. Sneyd had engaged himself from home during the summer, and he kindly lent me his house during his absence. Doctor Darwin shewed the most earnest attention to his patient. At times he thought the disease, which came on slowly, might be averted before it had taken root in her constitution, and at others he spoke with so much reserve as to alarm her most sanguine friends. Her disease encreased slowly, with all those vicissitudes which excite alternate hope and fear, and which keep the mind in the most painful anxiety.

I had the utmost reliance on the skill and attention of Doctor Darwin. His enemies, for merit must excite envy, always hinted, that he was inclined to try experiments upon such patients as were exposed to any chronic disease. I had frequent opportunity of knowing this to be false; and, in the treatment of Mrs. Edgeworth, he never, without the entire concurrence of her friends, followed any suggestion, even of

his own comprehensive and sagacious mind, that was out of the usual line of practice; on the contrary, it was always in the most cautious, I may almost say the most timid manner, that he proposed any thing, which he thought beyond the established limits.

Every physician of eminence in England was consulted, either in person or by letter. I took her to Mr. Day's house, where, from its vicinity to London, she might have access to the best advice. The moment Doctor Heberden saw her, I perceived by his looks, that he had no hopes; and when he gave his opinion, he did not attempt to deceive me. He was a man of much sagacity and experience, and his manner of communicating to me that dreadful sentence, which he was obliged to pronounce, was humane, kind, and impressive. He told me, that it was too frequently his lot, to see the most amiable and beautiful, and the most highly endowed females, the most exposed to this incurable malady. He advised me to attend more to the ease of my beloved wife, and to the palliation of symptoms, than to the pretensions of any medical help that held out hopes of recovery. He said, that, in conversing with us, he saw the strength of our attachment, and the superiority and uncommon powers of her mind; he observed, that on these I should rely for support, both for her and for myself.

We passed a few days in Essex with Mr. and Mrs. Day. They were very kind to Mrs. Edgeworth; but they did not see her danger in as strong a light as I did. On our return to Lichfield, where we staid for some time, the affection of her family, the conversation of some of her former friends, and the attentions of all her acquaintance, were sources of

great satisfaction to us both. After some months, when Mr. Sneyd returned home, we took a small house at Bighterton, near Shiffnal, in Shropshire. Here we had the medical assistance of Mr. Young, a humane and skilful surgeon: we had also easy access to Doctor Darwin, and to Mr. Sneyd's family.

Having parted with my house at Northchurch, I found myself happy in being able to procure any immediate residence, until it should be determined whether Honora should be advised to go to Clifton, Devonshire, or some warmer climate. She seemed willing to try Clifton, which, at that time, was in high repute; but the thought of going to any distant country was extremely painful to her.

Bighterton was near Weston, the seat of Sir Henry Bridgman.* Lady Bridgman and her daughters were as kind to Honora as it was possible. Every thing that their magnificent and hospitable mansion could afford, was at all times at our command. I cannot record this instance of benevolence, without observing that both of us, particularly my poor wife, felt interested by the amiable manners and cultivated understandings of this family. Nor was theirs a sudden burst of kindness, prompted by compassion and sympathy—it lasted—for it arose from generous hearts and sound judgment, that knew how to feel, and how to appreciate the pleasure of doing good.

Honora's disease advanced imperceptibly; but still it advanced. Her sister, Charlotte Sneyd, attended her with unceasing, but with unobtrusive care. Two of my children were with her, on whom their mother continued to bestow the most judicious attention.

* Afterwards Lord Bradford, father to the present Earl.

Her understanding, indeed, never partook of her disease; it was always calm, and clear, and active.

At length, in the month of April, she drew near her end. She had long known the nature of her distemper, and that it was incurable; but never for one moment did pain, or fear, or vain regret for every enjoyment that a human creature could possess, disturb the firmness of her mind. She not only looked upon death, as every wise and good person should behold it; but its near approach did not appal her.

Three days before she died, I was suddenly called up to her room. I found her in violent convulsions. Youth, beauty, grace, charms of person, and accomplishments of mind, reduced to the extreme of human misery, must have wrung the most obdurate heart. What must her husband feel at such a moment?—I felt her pulse, and whispered, "You are not dying." She looked at me with an effort of resolution and kindness, to thank me. When the fit ceased, she begged of me to sit down beside her bed. I took out my pencil, and determined to note whatever she said and did at this awful period, an employment that might enable me to bear with more fortitude the scene that I was to witness. She soon fell asleep, and wakened smiling. "I am smiling," said she, "at my asking you to sit beside me as a sort of protection, and at my being afraid to die in my sleep, when I never felt afraid of dying when awake." The ensuing days she talked during the intervals of dosing, about the education of her children, and about every thing which concerned my happiness. She recommended it to me in the strongest manner to marry her sister Elizabeth.

After my having sat up all the night of the 30th of

April, I was suddenly called at six o'clock in the morning. Her sister Charlotte was with her. The moment that I opened the door, her eyes, which had been fixed in death, acquired sufficient power to turn themselves towards me with an expression of the utmost tenderness. She was supported on pillows. Her left arm hung over her sister's neck beyond the bed. She smiled, and breathed her last!

At this moment I heard something fall on the floor. It was her wedding ring, which she had held on her wasted finger to the last instant—remembering, with fond superstition, the vow she had made, never again to lose that ring but with life. She never moved again, nor did she seem to suffer any struggle.

Thus died Honora Edgeworth. The most beloved as a wife, a sister, and a friend, of any person I have ever known. Each of her own family, unanimously, almost naturally, preferred her. My sister, Mrs. Ruxton, loved her with enthusiastic attachment. All her friends adored her, if treating her with uniform deference and veneration may be called adoring.

A dreadful duty still remained to be performed. She had requested, that no person but her sister Charlotte, myself, and her servant, should be permitted to touch her corpse. She was obeyed. That excellent sister, one of the most tender and gentle creatures upon earth, obeyed!—and through all this trying duty shewed a strength of mind and perseverance, that could scarcely be expected from the most resolute of another sex.

My steady friend, the steady friend of my lost wife, my sister Ruxton, had set out from Ireland with her husband, who had the kindness to attend her. But she arrived, alas! a day too late.

I passed the night before the funeral beside her coffin. The last look!—How often I thought, that I had taken the last look!

What a variety of recollections and ideas passed through my mind during this night! There was a clock in the room. I observed, that it was four o'clock. I was standing on the hearth, not leaning against any thing, and in that position I suddenly fell fast asleep, and though I slept but five minutes it seemed to me hours. The day began to dawn. I opened the window shutters and the sash; "The lark sang out, the morning smiled;" a strange sense of life and renewed vigour came over all my senses.

Providence has ordained the vicissitudes of day and night to act upon the human frame with unceasing influence. In the ordinary course of life, this influence is scarcely noticed; but upon extraordinary occasions we perceive its force, without being in the least able to account for it.

I roused myself to bear with fortitude the interment of my wife. The Bridgman family obtained permission to have her buried in the porch of the church, at King's Weston. I followed the coffin. I saw several persons in the church, whom melancholy curiosity had drawn together at an early hour. I heard the service. I saw the remains of what I had so much loved committed to the grave; but when I heard a shovelful of earth thrown on the coffin, a new sensation of grief struck me with unexpected force. I did not shed a tear, or breathe a sigh; but I felt that I must not stay. I left the church, and found myself at home, I could not well tell how.

My sister Ruxton, and Charlotte Sneyd, and my

children recalled me to myself; and without lamentation, we talked by intervals of the views before me—of my friends—my children—with a vacancy of mind, that I cannot by any means account for or describe.

After a few days I went to Lichfield, where I remained some time. In consequence of a most affectionate letter from Mr. Day, I took my two youngest daughters, Anna and Honora, with me, to his house in Essex. Mr. Day's conversation always interested me. Sound sense and rational conversation solace the mind more effectually, than the most affectionate condolence or sympathy. But even divine philosophy was in vain; I listened, I replied—I endeavoured to read—I felt Mr. Day's kindness to my children—but nothing relieved me from that listlessness which succeeds to repressed sorrow. From some false notions of manly firmness, I had repressed the natural expressions and consequences of sorrow. The prodigious force, which I exerted over my mind, was, as usual, succeeded by languor. I merely existed, and I felt indifferent about every thing, and every place; though I imagined from theory, that change of place would relieve me.

I returned to Lichfield where the associations of former times awakened feelings of tender sorrow, which, however sad, were far preferable to that inanimate state in which I had passed the preceding months.

Note by the Editor.

Among my father's papers, I found in his hand-writing a character of Mrs. Honora Edgeworth, ending with these words:

"The following letter, the last she ever wrote, is a sufficient "proof of the tenderness and composure of her mind.—Reader! "it was written by a woman sinking from ease, youth, beauty, "admiration, and love, to the grave."

"You do not indeed, my dear friend, know how difficult it "may be to write *one line.* I believe you have no idea of the "manner of my life, which is, however, much more comfortable "the last ten days, than some time preceding.

"I have every blessing, and I am happy. The conversation "of my beloved husband, when my breath will let me have it, "is my greatest delight; he procures me every comfort, and as "he always said he thought he should, contrives for me every "thing that can ease and assist my weakness.

"Like a kind angel whispers peace,
"And smooths the bed of death.

"This part is not yet come, but I doubt not his steadiness and "strong affection in those hours; as to the time of their arrival, "I remain in the most perfect tranquillity and uncertainty. The "spring is reckoned dangerous. If that time should decide the "affair, Farewell, and let me intreat you, my dear friend, to "believe, that I feel the highest respect for your virtues, and "gratitude for the continued warmth of your friendship.

"Adieu,

"Honora Edgeworth."

This letter was written a few days before her death. It was addressed to Mrs. Mary Powys.

CHAPTER XVI.

Nothing is more erroneous than the common belief that a man who has lived in the greatest happiness with one wife will be the most averse to take another. On the contrary, the loss of happiness which he feels when he loses her, necessarily urges him to endeavour to be again placed in a situation which had constituted his former felicity.

I felt that Honora had judged wisely, and from a thorough knowledge of my character, when she had advised me to marry again, as soon as I could meet with a woman, who would make a good mother to my children, and an agreeable companion to me. She had formed an idea that her sister Elizabeth was better suited to me than any other woman; and thought that I was equally well suited to her. Of all Honora's sisters I had seen the least of Elizabeth. After she had declined my friend Mr. Day's addresses, I understood that a gentleman, of a figure and manners uncommonly agreeable, was attached to her; and that she was not indifferent towards him. This gentleman had gone abroad, and it had been supposed that at some distant period, if he returned in circumstances sufficiently affluent, their marriage would be concluded. Notwithstanding this, Honora had spoken to her sister upon the subject

then nearest to her heart. Miss Elizabeth Sneyd expressed the strongest surprise at the suggestion. Not only because I was her sister's husband, and because she had another attachment, but independently of these circumstances, as she distinctly said, I was the last man of her acquaintance, that *she* should have thought of for a husband; and certainly, notwithstanding her beauty, abilities, and polished manners, I believed that she was as little suited to me.

After some time I found the Sneyd family in great anxiety about her health, which was apparently declining, though she had no distinct symptoms of any disease. Dr. Darwin advised sea-bathing, and recommended it to her to go to Scarborough. Her brothers, Mr. E. and Mr. W. Sneyd, and her two sisters, Mary and Charlotte, were to go with her. They invited me and my children to accompany them. Miss Charlotte Sneyd's attention to my children, arising from her devoted affection to their mother, was the greatest possible inducement to my accepting this kind offer.

The journey was in some measure agreeable. None of my female companions had ever seen the sea; and I think, that I was more struck with the surprise, and admiration, which they expressed at the sight of the ocean, than at any circumstance which had occurred since the loss of my wife. My two brothers-in-law were extremely kind to me: the social, gentle temper of the one, and the excellent understanding of the other, combined in efforts to soothe and console me; their sisters then and ever shewed me the utmost friendship and attention; so

that by degrees I was restored to myself, and to a sense of my situation.

Honora's advice pressed upon my mind; my thoughts fixed on Miss Elizabeth Sneyd. I learned, that the engagement, which had formerly subsisted, had been broken off; and gradually we both altered the opinion, that we were unsuited to each other; both influenced by the judgment and wishes of Honora.

It seldom happens, that people see with the eyes, or judge from the opinion of their very best friends, in choosing a companion for life. We were examples to the contrary. Unforeseen circumstances, however, interposed difficulties to our union; and certain officious friends produced a great deal of unnecessary vexation. The subject of this marriage became public, and was made an object of party disputes.

Many persons interfered, and in the Birmingham and other newspapers various replies and rejoinders appeared, which have sunk into oblivion.

Miss Elizabeth Sneyd's best friend, (out of her own family,) was Lady Holte, a woman of much knowledge of the world, and of great firmness of character. With this lady she had passed much of her youth; and now she was invited to her house in Cheshire, where at this period of our lives, when we most wanted it, we received from her, and from her daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Bracebridge, generous hospitality, and steady kindness.

After we had been asked three times in the parish church, we met to be married; but on the very morning appointed for our marriage the clergyman

received a letter, which alarmed him so much, as to make me think it cruel to press him to perform the ceremony. Lady Holte took Miss Elizabeth Sneyd to Bath: I went to London with my children, took lodgings in Gray's-Inn-Lane, and had our banns published three times in St. Andrew's church, Holborn. Miss Elizabeth Sneyd came from Bath, and on Christmas day, 1780, was married to me in St. Andrew's church, in the presence of my first wife's brother, Mr. Elers, his lady, and Mr. Day.

We went immediately to my house at Northchurch, where we resided during part of the winter, till we had disposed of the lease of that house, and of our furniture. We then went to London, where our old friends shewed us much kindness.

Sir Joseph Banks was about this time (1780-1) president of the Royal Society. I was invited by him to become a member of that body; and I shortly afterwards contributed to its Transactions a paper on the resistance of the air to bodies of different shapes; a circumstance which had been suggested to me by some experiments recorded in Robins upon gunnery. I was still a member of the literary club I formerly mentioned. John Hunter * was our president; Sir George Shuckburgh, Sir William Hamilton, Captain Cook, and several other men of distinguished characters, were among us. Omai, a native of Otaheite, was then in England; and he might well have passed for an European. It was an extraordinary circumstance observable in his manners, that he had, after a few months' residence in England,

* I fear there is an anachronism in the former pages about John Hunter and Sir George Shuckburgh.—Perhaps the circumstances I formerly mentioned did not happen till this time.

more the air and appearance of a gentleman, than it would have been possible for a native of England, of ordinary station, to have obtained, after he had grown up to be a man.*

We passed the ensuing summer at Davenport Hall, in Cheshire, near Brereton Hall, the seat of Sir Charles Holte. We rented it from Mr. Davenport, to whom it belonged. He had entertained Rosseau there, when he was brought over from France by Hume. In one of the rooms there was an excellent picture of the eccentric philosopher of Geneva. I believe that the print, which is prefixed to the English translation of his works, was taken from this picture. The people in the neighbourhood of Davenport, who had seen or spoken to him, thought him mad; perhaps they were not much mistaken.

Davenport Hall is a retired place, and nothing could be more uniform than our life, while we resided there. We walked, or read, or taught our children, during the morning; and we passed many of our evenings at Sir Charles Holte's magnificent house at

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Note by the Editor.

* It is remarkable, that Dr. Johnson made the same observation on the manner and appearance of Omai.

"He had been in company with Omai, a native of one of the South Sea islands, after he had been some time in this country. He was struck with the elegance of his behaviour, and accounted for it thus: 'Sir, he had passed his time, while in England, only with the best company; so that all he had acquired of our manners was genteel. As a proof of this, Sir, Lord Mulgrave and he dined one day at Streatham; they sat with their backs to the light, fronting me, so that I could not see distinctly; and there was so little of the savage in Omai, that I was afraid to speak to either, lest I should mistake one for the other."

Boswell's Life of Johnson.

Brereton. This house had been built in the time of Queen Elizabeth, when the style of building was in general convenient, and the rooms in good proportion.

In the dining room, which was spacious and lofty, the frieze was ornamented with the armorial bearings of every sovereign in the world, blazoned with perfect truth, and beautifully executed, with the coat of arms of the families into which they had intermarried. The escutcheons were of a moderate size. Altogether this had not only a general good effect, but an appearance of utility, which was satisfactory.

From the remote situation in which we lived, within reach but of few gentry, we had leisure to profit by the excellent library at Brereton Hall. For my own amusement also I procured a few tools, and executed some pieces of machinery, that were indeed more curious than important. I made a clock for the steeple at Brereton; and a chronometer of a singular construction, which I intended to present to the King: not from any peculiar merit, which it possessed as to accuracy, though it was sufficiently accurate for all common purposes; but I thought of presenting it, to add to his Majesty's collection of uncommon clocks and watches, which I had seen at St. James's. It went eight days, shewed the hours, minutes, and seconds on a common dial plate, by common hands, from one common centre; and yet it had no wheels, nor were any of its parts or movements connected by what is technically called *tooth and pinion.*

The power, by which the pendulum was kept in motion, was communicated from the weight, without any friction, except that of small pivots, none of

which moved through a space of more than the eight hundredth part of an inch in one second. I mention this as a kind of mechanical paradox: not as a pursuit worthy the attention of any man who can employ his time in something better than difficult trifles.

My mechanical occupations attracted the attention of some gentlemen in the neighbourhood, who told me, that there was a clergyman, who had a small living at no great distance, who was not only as fond of mechanics as myself, but who was also a man of much general knowledge. I requested, that my name should be mentioned to him, with an offer on my part to pay him a visit, if it would be agreeable. I had been informed, that since some family misfortune he never went from home. He returned an answer expressing a wish to see me, and I set out to find his residence, according to the directions I had received from the curate of the parish. After riding three or four miles through a well wooded country, I came suddenly upon the parsonage, at which this gentleman resided. The house was one of those irregular but convenient dwellings, which to an air of antiquity unite an appearance of neatness and comfort, of which sprucer and more modern buildings are often destitute. A white wicker gate opened into a small green court, the grass neatly mown, and nicely kept, with grapes hanging on the walls, and roses growing in profusion in the hedges.

All this was pleasing, yet not uncommon. But it was an uncommon sight, to behold an enormous white globe, erected upon an upright axis, in the middle of this enclosure, and round it several globes of less dimensions, the smallest of which was not larger than a pea. I readily comprehended, that

these globes were intended to represent the relative sizes of the planets, their satellites, and their distances from each other; but I could not conceive how any man could have thought it worth his while to execute such a laborious representation, unless he were a teacher of astronomy. I examined this apparatus leisurely before I went further, and was satisfied of its accuracy, and of the workmanlike manner in which it had been performed. At length I knocked at the house-door; and, after some time, it was opened by a person in black, who, notwithstanding great negligence in his dress, had the appearance of a gentleman. He had the remains of a fine person and countenance. I told him my name, and he shewed me into a parlour, which had been well furnished, but it was then a little decayed, and littered with books and papers. He made no apology for this disorder, but entered freely into conversation on various subjects, and upon various books: he seemed pleased, and, after some time, I ventured to inquire the purpose of the machinery, which I had seen before his door.

His countenance immediately changed, and, speaking with great agitation, he told me, that the globes which I had noticed were the work of his son, a boy of fourteen, whose talents, acquirements, and industry were far beyond his years; and who was as good as he was ingenious. The father added, that as he had lost this boy's mother, the youth had been for some years his only solace; that two years ago he had been deprived of this promising and affectionate son, by a lingering disease. He said, that he had been his boy's only master; and that, beside the learned

languages, he had given him a taste for English literature, and some knowledge of mathematics, and of natural philosophy. These instructions had been eagerly seized. Every hour, which was not dedicated to books, had been usefully employed; so that, at his very early age, the boy had been able to execute many philosophical and optical instruments, and to give some adequate notion of the sizes of the planets. For the amusement and instruction of his young companions, he had, with his own hands, and with indefatigable industry, constructed the globes which I had seen. The large ones were made of lath and plaister; the smaller of plaister of Paris.

I endeavoured, for some time in vain, to turn the father's thoughts aside from this subject, as I saw that it threw him into violent agitation. He still recurred to the object nearest his heart; and continually adduced fresh instances of his son's abilities, and of his amiable disposition.

It struck me, that his grief had injured his understanding, and I felt myself in a very painful situation; but at length the door opened, and a girl of fourteen or fifteen entering with a tea-tray in her hand suddenly stopped the course of his thoughts. He looked at her with such complacency, or rather with such admiration, as might be expected from a person, who had, for the first time, beheld a most beautiful object; and such indeed she was! Her dress was white, and was fashioned more like the dresses now in use, than according to the custom of the times when I saw her: she had none of those stiff and cumbersome bodices, which girls of her rank then usually wore. The natural shape appeared; her

shoulders were partly uncovered, her bosom but modestly revealed: what could be seen was not of that dead white, which poets compare with driven snow, but of that healthful whiteness which admits of no comparison with any inanimate object in the creation; her limbs and feet were beautifully shaped, her hair hung in a profusion of ringlets down her neck; the hair was of that peculiar auburn, that has no appearance of yellow but what is golden, and no tint approaching to red. Her features were not exactly regular, her blue eyes and aquiline nose were larger in proportion than her mouth; her eye-brows darker than her hair, and the contour of her face so exactly between flatness and too great prominence, as would have baffled the pencil to delineate. In a word, such perfect beauty I had never seen before. The expression of her countenance, the grace of her motion, unspoiled by masters or by affectation, and the sound of her harmonious voice, altogether amazed me.

"And she is better than she is beautiful, and as wise as she is good!" exclaimed my host, as she withdrew.—"She is a scholar, and an artist, and is neither proud nor vain of any of her mental or personal accomplishments."

We sat down to tea, however, without the young person. She appeared once or twice as a vision. To my imagination she resembled nothing that was real; and, in ancient fable, I could compare her to nothing ideal but the goddess Hebe. Her youth, the innocence and perfect modesty of her deportment, instantly destroyed any supposition that she was his mistress. But, if she was his daughter, why did not she preside at the tea-table?

After tea he took me up stairs, into a gallery filled with excellent books, not in handsome bindings, or accurately arranged, but all well chosen; and it was obvious that they had been often used. Here, without any ostentatious display, he proved to me that his mind was stored with modern literature and classical learning. He told me, that, during the life of his son, this library was a world to him; that his situation was too humble to give him access to the great, or the highly educated, and that he had no temptation to mingle with the vulgar and the ignorant.

After a conversation that detained me to a late hour, I took my leave with a mixture of pleasure and regret. To meet with such abilities and information, in such perfect seclusion, excited pleasure and surprise. To see such talents and acquirements totally lost to society, and nearly useless to their possessor, necessarily excited compassion and disappointment.

I scarcely ventured to make any farther inquiries about this gentleman: I feared that something was not right. But from what little I did hear, the fact seemed to be, that the mother of his favourite son had not always been his wife; and that his pecuniary difficulties arose from his being entangled in the meshes of the law by a nefarious attorney, who confined him to his house by writs, which were not legally obtained. This attorney had impoverished him by the most vexatious litigation, and had vowed that his life should finish in a jail.

It was, perhaps, fortunate for me, that I shortly afterwards left that neighbourhood.

I could not have refrained from making some attempt to deliver him, which might have involved

me in much difficulty, and which in the end would probably have been ineffectual.

Except this incident, scarcely any thing worth mentioning happened to me at Davenport.

A short time before I left Davenport, I became acquainted with * * *

TO THE READER.

No fact, opinion, or sentiment in the preceding memoirs has been altered by the editor: some verbal corrections, some changes, merely of arrangement, have been made; and a few passages have been omitted, which could be interesting only to the family of the writer.

His manuscript breaks off abruptly; for he was stopped by sudden illness: not that illness which proved fatal; he lived nearly ten years afterwards.

What he wrote of his own life, was written in the years 1808 and 9, at the urgent request of one of his sons, who anxiously desired that he should have continued, and completed his narrative. But after his recovery from the illness by which it had been interrupted, he was called upon to take a part in an active public employment, and his attention was afterwards engrossed by objects, which he thought more useful and important.

Excepting a few passages, he never shewed, even to his own family, what he had written of this account of his life; and when he was urged by them to continue it, he used to say, that "he would leave the rest to be finished by his daughter Maria."

These words struck me always with a sense of dread; yet still I let them pass, with a vain hope that the time was far distant, and that, perhaps, I might, in the chances of human life, never be called upon for the fulfilment of a promise, which had been asked, and given, many years before, when he was in perfect health, and when I was in perfect happiness. In later days, when his health began to decline, he from time to time wrote a few notes of circumstances, which he desired should be recorded: but this was so painful to me, that I could never, even at his request, make any myself, or fix my thoughts upon the subject.—The stroke came upon me the more heavily at last.—After he was no more, I read those solemn and pathetic words, in which he bequeaths the care of his posthumous character "to his beloved daughter," and in which he calls upon me for the performance of a promise and a duty, for which I felt unprepared and unequal.

In repeated attempts, I felt how little capable I was of fulfilling the trust reposed in me; but I have persevered. I could not relinquish the hope of doing justice to the memory of my father; of the father who educated me; to whom, under Providence, I owe all of good or happiness I have enjoyed in life. Few, I believe, have ever enjoyed such happiness, or such advantages as I have had in the instructions, society, and unbounded confidence and affection, of such a father and such a friend. He was, in truth, ever since I could think or feel, the first object and motive of my mind.

It may be thought, that with these feelings I am, of all persons, the least fit to be his biographer; and

that no time or endeavors can qualify me for the undertaking. The reader will apprehend, that he shall have a panegyric instead of an impartial life and character; he may fear, that he shall be wearied with uninteresting details, or pained by reiterated calls upon sympathy beyond what he can naturally feel: but even if I were not aware, as I am, of the inefficacy and the impolicy of such appeals, I should still shrink from making them: though fully sensible of the generous nature of the British public, yet I could not so far throw myself upon its indulgence. There are feelings, which, conscious of being too strong for public sympathy, will shun observation, and will never solicit compassion.

In continuing these memoirs, I shall endeavor to follow the example, that my father has set me, of simplicity, and of truth. The eventful part of his life is ended; nothing more of amusement must be expected from these memoirs. But I may trust to the interest which his narrative has excited, that whoever has followed his history thus far will wish to know more of him. They who have read his account of the circumstances in his early education, which formed his tastes and character, and who may have observed the remarkable influence of one predominant taste, in leading to the events, and to the connexions, both in friendship and marriage, which decided his fate in the beginning of life, will probably desire to follow his course to the end. They will wish to learn what his character became in middle age, and in advanced years; whether he uniformly pursued, or whether he changed, the mode of life he had chosen; and whether ultimately, and upon the whole, it tended to make him happy, or unhappy. Further,

they may expect to hear, what claims he may have to public attention as a man of invention, science, or literature: what he attempted or accomplished for the good of his fellow-creatures, either in private or in public life. Those who know any thing of him as a writer on education, may particularly desire to learn what was the result of his opinions, and of his long practice on this important subject. These things, and simply these, I shall state as briefly as possible.

Till now, I have never on any occasion addressed myself to the public alone, and speaking in the first person. Formerly I had always a friend and father, who spoke and wrote for me: one who exerted for me all the powers of his strong mind, even to the very last.

Far more than his protecting kindness, I regret, at this moment, the want of his guiding judgment, now when it is most important to me—where *his* fame is at stake.

MARIA EDGEWORTH.

February, 1819.

CHAPTER I.

[1782.

With the manuscript of my father's memoirs, I found on the next page to that where his narrative broke off, in his handwriting, the following memorandum.

"In the year 1782, I returned to Ireland, with a firm determination to dedicate the remainder of my life to the improvement of my estate, and to the education of my children; and farther, with the sincere hope of contributing to the melioration of the inhabitants of the country, from which I drew my subsistence."

I accompanied my father to Ireland. Before this time I had not, except during a few months of my childhood, ever been in that country; therefore every thing there was new to me: and though I was then but thirteen years old, and though such a length of time has since elapsed, I have retained a clear and strong recollection of our arrival at Edgeworth-Town.

Things and persons are so much improved in Ireland of latter days, that only those, who can remember how they were some fifty or sixty years ago, can conceive the variety of domestic grievances, which, in those times, assailed the master of a family, immediately upon his arrival at his Irish home. Wherever he turned his eyes, in or out of his house, damp, dilapi-

dation, waste! appeared. Painting, glazing, roofing, fencing, finishing—all were wanting.

The back yard, and even the front lawn round the windows of the house, were filled with loungers, *followers*, and petitioners; tenants, undertenants, *drivers*, *sub-agent* and agent, were to have audience; and they all had grievances and secret informations, accusations reciprocating, and quarrels each under each interminable. Alternately as landlord and magistrate, the proprietor of an estate had to listen to perpetual complaints, petty wranglings, and equivocations, in which no human sagacity could discover truth, or award justice. Then came widows and orphans, with tales of distress, and cases of oppression, such as the ear and heart of unhardened humanity could not withstand. And when some of the supplicants were satisfied, fresh expectants appeared with claims of promises and hopes, beyond what any patience, time, power, or fortune, could satisfy. Such and so great the difficulties appeared to me, by which my father was encompassed on our arrival at home, that I could not conceive how he could get through them, nor could I imagine how these people had ever gone on during his absence. I was with him constantly, and I was amused and interested and instructed by seeing how he made his way through these complaints, petitions, and grievances, with decision and despatch; he, all the time, in good humour with the people, and they delighted with him; though he often "rated them roundly," when they stood before him perverse in litigation, helpless in procrastination, detected in cunning, or convicted of falsehood. They saw into his character, almost as soon as he understood theirs. The first remark which I heard whispered aside among the

people, with congratulatory looks at each other, was —"His Honor, any way, is *good pay*."

It was said of the celebrated King of Prussia, that "he scolded like a trooper, and paid like a prince." Such a man would be liked in Ireland; but there is a higher description of character, which (give them but time to know it) the Irish would infinitely prefer. One who paid, not like a prince, but like a man of sense and humanity.

My father began, where all improvements should begin, at home. He was sensible, that, till his own home was comfortable, he could not pursue his principal objects; he could not set any example of neatness and order, or of propriety and proportion in his mode of living.

His house at Edgeworth-Town, as he mentions in the earlier part of his life, when Mrs. Honora Edgeworth and he lived there, was a tolerably good, old fashioned mansion; but when he now, with seven children, returned to it, and considered it with a view to its being the residence of a large family, he felt its many inconveniences.—It had been built in my grandfather's time, in a bad situation, for the sake of preserving one chimney, that had remained of the former edifice. To this old chimney the new house was sacrificed: to this, and to the fancy, formerly fashionable, of seeing through a number of doors a *suite* of apartments. To gratify this fancy it was made a slice of a house, all front, with rooms opening into each other, through its whole length, without any intervention of passage. All the rooms small and gloomy, with dark wainscots, heavy cornices, little windows, corner chimneys, and a staircase taking up half the house, to the destruction of the

upper story. In short, a more hopeless case for an architect, and for a master of a large family, could scarcely occur. It was an immediate temptation to go into great expense.

At that time, in Ireland, many of the gentry were in remarkable extremes as to their dwelling houses. Some travelled gentlemen erected superb mansions disproportioned to their fortunes, and at last were obliged to sell an estate to pay for a house; or at best they lived in debt, danger, and subterfuge the rest of their days, nominally possessors of a palace, but really in dread of a gaol. Others "mistook reverse of wrong for right:" marking these misfortunes, they determined never to build; so lived on in wretched houses out of repair, with locks of doors out of order, the pulleys of windows without sash-line; in short, without what we are accustomed to consider as the common comforts and decencies of life. Others shunned these extremes; but without keeping the safe middle course, they struck out a new half way mode of going wrong. These would neither build a palace, nor live in a hovel; but they planned the palace, built offices to suit, then turned stable and coach-house into their dwelling house, or provisional residence for the remainder of their days, leaving the rest to fate, and to their sons.

Happily for himself and his family, my father avoided these errors; and he had some merit in so doing, because he had the inventive taste for building, and all the habits of activity and vivacity of temper, which disposed him to be impatient of slow progress towards any object of his wishes. Here, however, he went on by slow degrees, as prudence required, year after year, as his circumstances could afford, without

in any one year exceeding his income: he made additions, or alterations, till after exerting some engineering skill, not without frequent predictions from the lookers on, that he would pull the whole house down, he succeeded in making it such as to satisfy his own moderate wishes, and a comfortable residence for a large family.

It was as difficult a task to make any thing of the grounds as of the house: they appeared to have been originally laid out in humble imitation, on a small scale, of the frontispiece to Millar's Gardener's Dictionary, in the original Dutch taste. But the very day after his arrival, he set to work, and continued perseveringly, fencing, draining, levelling, planting, though he knew that all he was doing could not *show* for years. He contented himself with the reflection, that time and industry together might render the whole neat and cheerful. Doomed to a place where nothing sublime or beautiful could be found, he used to comfort himself by considering, that it was the better for his family; he said that, if he had been placed in a charming situation, he might, perhaps, have felt irresistible temptations to expensive improvement.

A celebrated man has declared, that he would ask no better test for judging of the understandings of his fellow-creatures, than the houses they build, and the improvements they make. It is an inadequate, but not altogether an absurd test.

As to society, we had at this time but little, except with Lord Granard's family, at Castle-Forbes, and with the Pakenhams at Pakenham Hall, the residence of Lord Longford. The connexion and friendship, which had long subsisted between the

Pakenham family and ours, my father has mentioned in the early part of his narrative. Had that narrative been continued by him, he would have strongly marked the high regard he felt for Admiral Lord Longford, the father of the present Earl, who at the time of which I am now writing, just after the American and French war, was living with his family at home.

His mother, a woman of great wit, and, for her day, of extraordinary knowledge and literature, my father has mentioned with gratitude, as having inspired him, when he was a boy, with an ambition to be something more than a sportsman. Though now considerably advanced in years, her intellectual powers continued in full vigour and animation. Lady Longford, the wife of his friend, was also a woman of quick talents, and of ardent affections. With firm principles and exalted character, she was fit to be the mother of heroes. A large family was at this time growing up, and educating under her care, at hospitable Pakenham Hall, where various connexions and friends, often drawn happily together, formed a delightful domestic society. But Pakenham Hall was twelve miles distant from us, in the adjoining county of Westmeath. There was a vast Serbonian bog between us; with a bad road, an awkward ferry, and a country so frightful, and so overrun with yellow weeds, that it was aptly called by Mrs. Greville "the yellow dwarf's country."

Castle-Forbes, the residence of the Earl of Granard, was more within our reach than Pakenham Hall. There the society was various, and very agreeable, especially when Lady Granard's mother, the late Lady Moira, was in the country. Lady Moira's taste

Edward, Lord Longford

Captain, Royal Navy.

Engraved by Henry Meyer from a Picture by Hugh Hamilton

London Richard Bentley 1844

for literature, general knowledge, and great conversational talents, drew round her cultivated and distinguished persons ; but it was her noble, high spirited character, which struck my father still more than her acquirements or her abilities. Eager to give his family opportunities of enjoying the advantages of such society, he was gratified by the manner, in which she first encouraged and distinguished his daughter, and grateful for the friendship, with which Lady Moira honored her ever afterwards.

In our more immediate neighbourhood, we at this time commenced an acquaintance with a friendly and cultivated family of the name of Brooke. The father, an old, well-informed clergyman, was nearly related to the Mr. Brooke, who wrote the celebrated novel of " the Fool of Quality," and the tragedy of " Gustavus Vasa." He possessed a considerable share of his relation's original genius, enthusiasm, and simplicity of character. With much classical learning, he had an admiration for Homer, which he expressed often with a vehemence, that appeared extravagant in the opinion of his common auditors, but in which my father most cordially sympathised. Mr. Brooke's daughter was married to Mr. Eyles Irwin, the well known traveller.

Considering the state of society in Ireland, at the time of which I am now writing, my father may be esteemed fortunate, in finding in a remote place such acquaintance. In general, formal large dinners and *long sittings* were the order of the day and night. The fashion for literature had not commenced, and people rather shunned than courted the acquaintance of those who were suspected to have literary taste or talents. But even at that time my father foresaw,

and foretold, the happy change, which increasing intercourse with other countries, improving education, and the consequent progress of the diffusion of knowledge, would in a few years produce in Irish society.

The advantage of the residence of proprietors upon their estates in Ireland can be fully understood only from the example or evidence of those who have had actual experience on the subject. In this point of view, accounts of the affairs of private Irish gentlemen may be useful to the public. The value of the experience must be measured by the accuracy of the evidence, and by the extent of the opportunities for acquiring information. It is not essential, that the observations should have been made on a large scale as to property, provided that their accuracy has been verified by time.

As soon as my father returned to Edgeworth-Town, he began to receive his rents without the intervention of agent or sub-agent. On most Irish estates there is, or there was, a sort of personage commonly called a *driver;* a person who drives and impounds cattle for rent and arrears. Such persons being often ill chosen, and of the lowest habits as well as of the lowest order, misuse their authority; and frequently unfaithful to the landlord, as well as harassing to the tenant, sell the interest of their employer for glasses of whiskey; and finish by running away with money, which they have received *on account*, or by extortion from tenants. These *drivers* are, alas! from time to time too necessary in collecting Irish rents. — My father, rendered this petty tyrant's authority as brief as possible. He forbad him to call upon any tenants

without express orders, or to threaten seizure of cattle, or upon any pretence to receive money from them *on account.* He desired that none of his tenants would pay rent to any person but to himself, or at his own house; thus taking away subordinate interference, he became individually acquainted with his tenantry—saw, heard, talked to them, and obtained full knowledge of their circumstances and characters. From his own observation, and from inquiry from the most intelligent farmers, he soon made himself master of the value of the different land on his estate.

Considerable farms fell out of lease; and he was then able to fulfil his wish of doing what was both just and kind. In every case where the tenant had improved the land, or even where he had been industrious, though unsuccessful, his claim to preference over every new proposer, his *tenant's right,* as it is called, was admitted.—But the mere plea of "*I have lived under your Honor, or your Honor's father or grandfather,*" or "*I have been on your Honor's estate so many years*"—he disregarded. Farms, originally sufficient for the comfortable maintenance of a man, his wife, and family, had, in many cases, been subdivided from generation to generation; the father giving a bit of the land to each son to settle him.—The hope was, that these settlements would be confirmed by the landlord at the expiration of the lease; but this he would not do. The maintenance was hardly sufficient to keep them one step above beggary; and insufficient even for this, when the number of their children increased. It was an absolute impossibility, that the land should ever be improved, if let in these miserable *lots.* Nor was

it necessary that each son should hold land, or advantageous that each should live on *his "little potato garden,"* without further exertion of mind or body.

He was, I believe, one of the first landlords in Ireland, who gave up all the petty, oppressive claims of *duty* work, and all the restrictive clauses, then common in Irish leases, which subject the industrious and skilful to suffer for the faults of their idle or vicious copartners.

He never even bound his tenants to have their corn ground at any particular mill,—a common restriction in an Irish lease. He omitted a variety of old feudal remains of fines and penalties : but there was one clause which he continued in every lease, with a penalty annexed to it, called *an alienation fine.*— A fine of so much an acre upon the tenant's reletting any part of the devised land. This clause he thought necessary for several reasons, both for the interest of landlord and tenant. To protect the landlord from the danger of having his property pass from the hands of good and agreeable tenants, to those who might be litigious, or insufficient ; to prevent a set of *middlemen* from taking land at a reasonable rent, and reletting it immediately to poor tenants at the highest price possible to be obtained from their necessities. The evils and misery resulting from that system are now sufficiently understood. But when they were not as clearly seen as they now are my father exerted himself to withstand and oppose them. He never failed to insist upon the payment of the alienation fine, in every one of the few instances in which any of his tenants braved the clause. The fine was generally calculated so

nearly to the value of the utmost additional rent that could be obtained by reletting the land, that the tenant found it not for his interest to disobey.

As to the time or term of his leases, he avoided the opposite error which had prevailed among Irish landlords. Some who had been non-resident, who did not know the improveable nature and value of their own lands, and who were in pressing want of ready money, let their land far below its value, for the sake of a fine paid down in ready money. Many have let for ninety-nine years; and others according to a form common in Ireland, for three lives, renewable for ever. These leases, in course of years, have been found extremely disadvantageous to the landlord, the property having risen so much in value, that the original rent was absurdly disproportioned. In the course of his life he saw the end of two leases for ninety-nine years, granted by his predecessors, and enjoyed in consequence considerable rise of property. In these, and all cases where long leases had been granted, he did not find that the land had been improved by the tenants, or that they felt any gratitude, for what had been originally desired and granted as a favor. On the contrary, long possession had made the occupier almost forget that he was a tenant; and consider his being forced to surrender the land, or to renew the lease at a raised rent, at the expiration of the lease, as a great hardship. The longest term my father ever gave was thirty-one years, with one, or sometimes two lives. He usually gave one life, reserving to himself the option of adding another, the son, perhaps, of the tenant, if he saw that the tenant deserved it by his conduct. He never took a fine on giving a lease.

In course of time, old leases lapsing, and clauses claiming oppressive duty-work in Ireland being no longer inserted in new leases, there arose a difficulty to gentlemen in getting laborers at certain times of the year, when all are anxious to work for themselves: for instance, at the seasons for cutting turf, setting potatoes, and getting home the harvest.

To provide against this difficulty, landlords adopted a system of taking duty-work, in fact, in a new form. They had *cottiers* (cottagers), day-laborers established in cottages, on their estate, usually near their own residence: many of these cabins were the poorest habitations that can be imagined; and these were given *rent free*, that is, the rent was to be *worked* out on whatever days, or on whatever occasions, it was called for. The grazing for *the* cow, the patch of land for flax, and the ridge or ridges of potato land were also to be paid for in days' labor in the same manner. The uncertainty of this tenure *at will*, that is, at the pleasure of the landlord, with the rent in labor and time, variable also at his pleasure or convenience, became rather more injurious to the tenant, than the former fixed mode of sacrificing so many days duty-work, even at the most hazardous seasons of the year.

As far as circumstances would permit, my father obviated the evils of this cottier system, evils which have been so ably pointed out in Mr. Jones' late work *on Rent*. He gave comfortable cottages at a low rent to his labourers, to be held at will from year to year; but he paid them wages exactly the same as what they could obtain elsewhere. They worked then as free laborers; but they found themselves obliged to work, that they might pay their rent. And their

houses being better than they could obtain elsewhere, they had a motive for industry and punctuality that they might preserve these and other advantages. Under the words *other advantages* are included potato land, and what are termed *con acres*, flax ground, &c.

My father's indulgence as to the time he allowed his tenantry for the payment of their rent was unusually great. He left always a year's rent in their hands: this was half a year more time than almost any other gentleman in our part of the country allowed. Some landlords made their tenants pay up to the day; or, in their mode of expressing themselves, made them English-tenants. How far his indulgence was advantageous or hurtful to them or to his own interests, has been questioned, and may be questionable; but, without discussing this point, I simply state the fact His rents were paid half-yearly, and he was always very exact in requiring, that the tenants should not, in their payments, pass beyond the bounds allowed, the half-yearly days—the 25th of March and 29th of September. In this point they knew his strictness so well, that they seldom ventured to go into arrear, and never did so with impunity.

If the people had found or suspected him to be weak, or, as they call it, *easy*, there would have been an end of all hope of really doing them good. They would have cheated, loved, and despised a mere *easy* landlord; and his property would have gone to ruin, without either permanently bettering their interests or their morals.

In Ireland, it has been, time immemorial, common with tenants who have had advantageous bargains,

and who have no hopes of getting their leases renewed, to wear out the ground as much as possible; to *break it up* toward the end of the term; or to *overhold*, that is, to keep possession of the land, refusing to deliver it up. This obliged the landlord to a tiresome law process, and subjected him to lie out of his rent for at least a twelvemonth.

A tenant, who held a farm of considerable value under an old lease, when his lease was out, besought my father to permit him to remain on the farm for another year, pleading, that he had no other place, to which he could at that season, it being winter, remove his large family. The permission was granted; but at the end of the year, taking advantage of this favor, he refused to give up the land. Proceedings at law were immediately commenced against him; and it was in this case, that the first trial in Ireland was brought, on an act for recovering double rent from a tenant for holding forcible possession, after notice to quit. This vexatious and unjust practice of tenants in holding possession against landlords had been too common, and had too long been favored by the party spirit of petty juries; who, being chiefly composed of tenants, had made it a common cause, and a principle, if it could in any way be avoided, never to give a verdict, as they said, against themselves. But, in this case, the indulgent character of the landlord, combined with the ability of his advocate*, succeeded in moving the jury,—a verdict was obtained for the landlord. The double rent was paid; and the fraudulent tenant was obliged to quit the country *unpitied*. Real good was done by this example.

* Mr. Fox, afterwards Judge Fox.

There were some other points necessary to be established on coming to settle in Ireland, at the time of which I am writing.

Gentlemen proprietors, often from the spirit of party and of pride, or from electioneering motives, or pecuniary interest, made it a practice not only to skreen, but, as they call it, *to protect* their tenants, when they got into any difficulties by disobeying the laws. Smuggling and illicit distilling seemed to be privileged cases, where, the justice and expediency of the spirit of the law being doubtful, escaping from the letter of it appeared but a trial of ingenuity or *luck*. In cases that admitted of less doubt, in the frequent breach of the peace from quarrels at fairs, rescuing of cattle driven for rent, or in other more serious outrages, tenants still looked to their landlord for protection; and hoped, even to the last, that his Honor's or his Lordship's interest would get the fine taken off, the term of imprisonment shortened, or the condemned criminal snatched from execution. In a country, and in a state of society, where habits and feelings such as these prevailed, and had been long established; and where ideas of protection and favor constituted almost an essential part of the idea of a good landlord, it was difficult for any individual, to act directly contrary to the prepossessions, habits, and interests of the common people, and yet to preserve their attachment: but this my father effected. He never would, on any occasion, or for the persons he was known to like best, interfere to *protect*, as it is called, that is, to skreen, or to obtain pardon for any one of his tenants or dependants, if they had really infringed the laws, or had deserved punishment.

Nor did he ever even try to obtain certain little *preferences*, which those gentlemen, who have influence on county grand juries, and who can satisfy their consciences that *jobbing* is right and necessary, easily managed to gain. He set an example of being scrupulous to the most exact degree as a grand juror, both as to the money required for roads or for any public works, and as to the manner in which it was laid out. At first this diminished both his popularity and his influence, especially in decreasing his power of giving certain customary rewards. But this was soon overbalanced by the permanent power which integrity obtains.

To his character as a good landlord it was added, that he was a "*real gentleman*." This phrase, pronounced with well known emphasis, comprises a vast deal in the opinion of the lower Irish. They seem to have an instinct for the *real gentleman*, whom they distinguish, if not at first sight, infallibly at first hearing. They observe, that the real gentleman bears himself kindly, is always the most civil in speech, and ever seems the most *tender of the poor*. This good seeming, they found, was something more than *seeming* in my father. They soon began to rely upon his justice as a magistrate. This is a point, where, their interest being nearly concerned, they are wonderfully quick and clearsighted; they soon discovered, that Mr. Edgeworth leaned neither to Protestant nor Catholic, to Presbyterian nor Methodist; that he was not the *favourer* nor partial protector of his own or any other man's followers. They found, that the law of the land was not in his hands an instrument of oppression, or pretence for partiality. They discerned, that he did even justice; neither inclining to

the people, for the sake of popularity; nor to the aristocracy, for the sake of power. This was a thing so unusual, that they could at first hardly believe that it was really what they saw. Electioneering motives, and the secret action of personal friendship and aversion, were of course suspected. But, the plain facts forced their way, "Go before Mr. Edgeworth, and you will surely get justice," was the saying of the neighbourhood. Besides relying on his justice, they felt with all the warmth of their warm hearts his eagerness to exert himself in the cause of the injured or oppressed. The Irish are more attached by what touches their hearts, than by what concerns their interests; and those who find the way to their hearts have the best chance,—I might say those only have any chance, of so far getting at their heads, as to make them understand their true interests, or to cure them of any of their faults or bad habits.

At this time there was deplorably lax morality in Ireland as to oaths; and the irreverend manner in which they were by some magistrates administered increased the evil. When one of these justices of the peace asked whether the complainant would swear to the truth of what he had been saying, he put the question in a bullying tone, and the answer usually was, "To be sure I will, please your Honour. —I won't be making a liar of myself.—I'll swear *then* to the truth of all I've been telling your Honour. —Why would not I?"

And, when the book was put into their hands, some of the modes of evasion practised were too burlesque to be here recorded; and, if detected, it

was considered only a laughing matter. But my father never laughed upon such occasions; he took the most serious pains to impress upon the minds of these poor people the peril to which, by perjury, they exposed themselves in this world and in the next.

I have often been witness of the care with which he explained the nature, and enforced the observance of that great bond of civil society, which rests on religion. The solemnity of the manner in which he administered an oath can never leave my memory; and I have seen the salutary effect produced on the minds of those of the lower Irish, who are supposed to be least susceptible of moral or religious impressions. But it was not on the terrors of religion my father most dwelt. No man could be more sensible than he was of the consolatory, fortifying influence of the Christian religion, in sustaining the mind in adversity, poverty, and age. No man knew better its power to carry hope and peace in the hour of death to the penitent criminal. When, from party bigotry, it has happened that a priest has been denied admittance to the condemned criminal, my father has gone to the county gaol, to soothe the sufferer's mind, and to receive that confession, on which, to the poor Roman Catholic's belief, his salvation depended.

Whatever their peculiar tenets might be, none of his fellow-creatures in any rank of life, or in any connexion or relationship to him, of servant, tenant, dependant, friend, were ever by him disturbed in their faith; nor did he ever weaken in any heart that which he considered as the greatest blessing that a human creature can enjoy,—a firm religious faith and hope. No man could be more tolerant

than he was, in judging of the religious opinions of all classes and sects; provided he had reason to think them sincere, he shewed them the utmost respect; and by such conduct he did more good to the cause of religion, of virtue, and civil peace in Ireland, than could have been effected by the most rigid disciplinarian, or by the most furious zealot.

CHAPTER II.

When my father landed at Dublin in 1782, the Irish Volunteers were in full force. The story of their rise and progress, though it is familiar to every Irishman, may not be universally known. A few words will tell all that is necessary for our purpose.

The volunteers first appeared in Ireland long before this time (in 1778), at a period of the American War, when England, obliged to employ her armies elsewhere, had not troops sufficient for the defence of Ireland, which was then threatened with invasion, and exposed to domestic insurrection. Her principal nobility and gentry embodied themselves volunteers for the defence of the country, and the first corps was under the command of the Duke of Leinster. In time they increased to a body of about fifty thousand men, under the command of captains, colonels, and a general of their own chusing. The Earl of Charlemont was their general. Their existence and their proceedings were neither owned nor disavowed by the legislature, till one of the Lord Lieutenants of Ireland, at a moment of danger, when the north was threatened with invasion, and no other troops were to be had, applied to Lord Charlemont for the assistance of the volunteers. Continuing for

several years under perfect order, and good discipline, they rendered their country respectable in the eyes of England, as well as of foreigners, and more than suggested the possibility of her independence. Irish patriots felt the advantages, that might be made of their position, and they used their power with prudence and energy. The friends of Ireland, both in the Irish and English parliament, obtained for her great benefits; some for her commerce, more for her constitution and liberty. Between the years 1778 and 1783 many laws obnoxious to Ireland were repealed; in particular, one penal statue against the Catholics, which we can now perhaps scarcely believe to have existed in our own times. It was a statute, of which the penalties had sometimes lain dormant, but had, at others, been called into action for the purposes of private treachery, or public persecution.

A statute of King William the Third, entitled, "An act to prevent the growth of popery," ordained no less than forfeiture of inheritance against those Catholics, who had been educated abroad; at the pleasure of any informer, it confiscated their estates to the next protestant heir: that statute further deprived papists of the power of obtaining any legal property by purchase; and, simply for officiating in the service of his religion, any Catholic priest was liable to be imprisoned for life. Some of these penalties had fallen into disuse; but, as Mr. Dunning observed to the English House of Commons, "many respectable Catholics still lived in fear of them, and some actually paid contributions to persons, who, on the strength of this act, threatened them with prosecutions." Lord Shelburne stated, in the House of Lords, "that even the most odious part of this statute had been recently

acted upon in the case of one Molony, an Irish priest, who had been informed against, apprehended, convicted, and committed to prison, by means of the lowest and most despicable of mankind—a common *informing-constable*.—The privy council used efforts in behalf of the prisoner; but, in consequence of the written law, the King himself could not give a pardon, and the prisoner must have died in jail, if Lord Shelburne and his colleagues had not released him at their own risk."

In moving for the repeal of this law, Sir George Saville declared, "that one of his principal views was to vindicate the honor, and assert the purity of the Christian religion." The motion for its repeal passed the English House of Commons without a single negative, and in the House of Lords it was opposed but by the solitary voice of one bishop. Thus, Lord Nugent, Sir George Saville, Mr. Burke, Mr. Dunning, in the English House of Commons, and Lord Rockingham and Lord Shelburne, in the House of Lords, by the combined force of patriotism, integrity, law, reason, and political ability, obtained this first step towards the improvement of the condition of the Catholics in Ireland. The Irish patriots, encouraged by success, and by their powerful position, turned to other objects, raised their tone, and called loudly for general emancipation from the legislative and commercial restrictions of England. In 1781, the celebrated convention of delegates, from one hundred and forty-three corps of volunteers, assembled at Dungannon. Their resolutions were adopted also by the volunteers of the South; and at length Mr. Grattan moved an address to the throne, asserting the legislative independence of Ireland. The address passed;

the repeal of a certain act, empowering England to legislate for Ireland, followed; and the legislative independence of this country was acknowledged. This kingdom was then in a transport of joy, and the patriots and volunteers were at the height of their popularity.

My father landed in Dublin at the moment when the nation voted a parliamentary grant of fifty thousand pounds, as a testimony of their sense of the services of their great and successful orator and patriot Mr. Grattan. My father was in the gallery of the Irish House of Commons, when that vote passed, and he saw and sympathised with the public enthusiasm. In the midst of this enthusiasm, and while the volunteer patriots, in the general exaltation of their spirits, anticipated a variety of future undefined advantages to Ireland, his hopes fixed on those which in his view were the most important objects. A few days after he came to Dublin, he published an address to the associated volunteer corps of the county of Longford, from which I give the following extracts:

"GENTLEMEN,

"I congratulate you upon the success of your manly and prudent conduct: from a state of dependence and danger you are become secure and free; no foreign enemy can alarm you, no jealous rival refuse you the rights of Freemen.

"But, at this moment of universal joy and exultation, let me recall to your remembrance, that without an effectual Reformation of the Irish House of Commons, no solid advantage can be obtained from our present success. A venal Parliament may, by degrees, yield every thing but the name of Freedom; and the slow but certain influence of corruption, may, in a few years, reduce you to the same subjection, which you have so nobly shaken off by the well timed exertions of national courage, and unexampled prudence.

"Every volunteer at this instant feels, and exults in his own con-

sequence: did he feel this ardour for liberty, this independence of rank and wealth, before he became a volunteer? Does he expect, that, when the corps he belongs to disbands, or forms part of a militia, he will hold the same share of the national power, which he does at present? No, the instant he lays down his arms, and that instant must arrive, his consequence and all his rights as a man and citizen fall into the hands of a few, who influence the boroughs which return the majority of the Parliament. Here, my friends, is the object, upon which the real and permanent happiness of your country depends: increase the number of representatives for your counties, shorten the period of their delegation, balance the parliamentary weight of your boroughs, and every avenue of your freedom will be guarded. From a Parliament dependent only on its constituents every measure of public utility and internal prosperity will necessarily arise, and every freeman in Ireland will possess his just share in the legislation of his country. It is not for me to point out the means or measure of this important reformation; the wisdom of all the associated corps of Ireland must be combined to determine them. But, as a friend to my country, I think it my duty, at this crisis of your fortune, to urge the only measure, which I believe to be *effectual* for your future happiness and dignity. The liberality of the volunteer resolutions respecting religious toleration, and the late act in favour of the Roman Catholics of this country, tend to a union of interests, that promises the most favourable consequences. What can promote this approach of sentiments more strongly than increasing the importance of the rights of freeholders?—Their importance will not merely be *doubled*, by doubling the number of county members—it will increase in a proportion greater than I will venture to determine. No little interest between landlord and tenant will then subjugate the latter to a blind dependence on the owner of his farm; a yeomanry will, by degrees, arise, which will diffuse liberty and industry through every class of the inhabitants of Ireland.

"The aristocratic, by far the most powerful part of this kingdom, would at any other time smile at an attempt upon its influence. Trust me, my friends, that aristocracy must restore to you your rights, if you demand them; and the time will come, when even the families, which now possess the most extensive interest in boroughs, will bless the hour that turns their ambition from a sordid scramble for titles and places, to the solid happiness of serving an industrious and prosperous people.

"For myself, I have no interest to serve, no private pique to gratify; nor have I any view in offering you my advice, but what every Irishman would be proud to avow—the liberty and glory of my country.

"I hope the importance of this subject will induce you to assemble and deliberate upon its expediency, though it is not offered to your consideration by a person of more consequence than

"Your obedient and faithful servant,
"RICHARD LOVELL EDGEWORTH."

The first copy of this address was, as I remember, lying on my father's table, in Dublin, when Mr. William Foster, (afterwards bishop of Clogher,) his old school-fellow and friend, came to see him. On looking over it, he smiled, and with his look of good humoured raillery, took up a pen, and wrote the word *free* before the signature, in the manner in which members of Parliament franked letters. He inferred from the popular topics and tone of the address, that the writer was preparing to become a candidate for the county of Longford. But his friend was mistaken, neither popularity, nor a seat in parliament, was my father's object; he meant only that, which persons who have seen much of the political world can scarcely believe, that a man past thirty, and a man of talents, can intend by a political address, *simply* the good of his country. The expectation, that he would declare himself a candidate, was raised almost to a certainty, when he appeared at a county meeting, called for the purpose of naming candidates.

At this meeting he proposed, and with some difficulty carried resolutions, and a petition for parliamentary reform. These were the first resolutions, and this was the first petition on that subject in Ireland. Other counties eagerly followed this example;

and in the course of a few months there were county meetings, and meetings of volunteer corps all over Ireland; delegates from the volunteers were appointed to provincial assemblies, whence a fresh selection was to be made for a grand national convention in Dublin. My father, of course, was a delegate to the Leinster provincial meeting; but during the time that had elapsed between the first moving of this business at the county of Longford meeting in June, and the provincial assemblies in September, the aspect of public affairs with regard to Ireland, and the position of the volunteers, had considerably changed. Peace was made with America, and with France. England had troops now at her disposal, and the volunteers ceased to be necessary for the defence of this country. Government no longer regarded them with a propitiating or respectful, but rather with a jealous yet scornful eye, and were now prepared to resist their further interference, and to watch their proceedings to find reasons for their dissolution.

Attempts had already been made during the summer of 1782 to substitute what were called fencible regiments instead of the volunteer corps: the appointment of officers and their pay had been held out as a temptation by government, which some of the volunteers, it was whispered, would not be able to resist; but the measure was altogether so unpopular and so odious to the patriots, and to the great body of the volunteers, that those who had been inclined to desert the popular cause, were anxious to keep their own secret. The scheme of fencible regiments was abandoned. The disposition of government, however, was manifest, and gave sufficient warning to the volunteer patriots to be on their guard, both for their

own sake, and for the good of the cause in which they were engaged. The reasonable and well-informed among them were sensible, that they had perhaps already snatched a grace beyond the reach of the constitution; nor did the applause, by which these happy efforts of patriotism had been crowned, prevent them from perceiving, that it must now be their care to defy criticism by a more strict conformity to constitutional rules.

That such was my father's opinion, declared before the event justified the judgment, appears from the following passage in a letter to his most intimate friend, written a few days previous to the Leinster provincial assembly, where the question was to be discussed, whether the delegates for the future convention were in fact to be military from volunteer corps, or deputies from counties, constitutionally meeting to address and petition the parliament and the throne.

"I hear that the meeting on Thursday is to be very numerous. I am afraid I shall become unpopular, and be much attacked for endeavoring to persuade this assembly, not to chuse delegates for the national convention, but *to let the counties chuse for themselves*. But I think it my duty, to speak my opinion; and I know, that the mode of proceeding they propose would afterwards be an objection in parliament."

The scheme of sending delegates from volunteer corps was persisted in; but the meeting was more temperate in other points than he had expected: their proceedings, after much debate, ended in a judicious resolution, that a reform should be sought *through the intervention of parliament*.

At length the convention, consisting of one hundred and sixty delegates from the volunteer corps, met at the Royal Exchange in Dublin, November the 9th, 1783.—Parliament was then sitting. An armed convention assembled in the capital, and sitting at the same time with the houses of Lords and Commons, and deliberating on a legislative question, was a new and unprecedented spectacle. It was feared, from the general fermentation of men's minds, and from the particular enthusiasm of some of the delegates, that the convention might be hurried into acts of fatal imprudence.

In this convention, as in all public assemblies, there was a violent and a moderate party. Lord Charlemont, the president of the assembly, was at the head of the moderate men. He was not convinced of the strict legality of the meeting, but he thought a reform in parliament so important and desirable an object, that he deemed it the wisdom of a true patriot to sacrifice, for the probability or chance of obtaining this great advantage, mere legal punctilio, and to hazard all, but, what he was too wise and good to endanger, the peace of the country. Lord Charlemont accepted the office of president, specially with the hope, that he and his friends might be able to influence the convention in favor of proceedings at once temperate and firm. The very sincerity of his desire to attain a reform, rendered him clearsighted as to the means to be pursued.

Another of the leaders in this convention was the Bishop of Derry (Lord Bristol). He wishing well to Ireland, but of a far less judicious character than Lord Charlemont, was at the head of the opposite party

Both were my father's private friends, and, both honored him with their confidence. Lord Charlemont, foreseeing the danger of disagreement between the parliament and convention, if at this time any communication were opened between them, earnestly deprecated the attempt. It was his wish, that the convention, after declaring their opinion in favor of a parliamentary reform, should adjourn without adopting a specific plan; and that they should refer it to future meetings of each county, to send to parliament, in the regular constitutional manner, their petitions and addresses. But Mr. Flood, wishing to distinguish himself as the champion of reform, and to carry the measure at once by a bold stroke, proposed that he at the head of some other members of the Irish parliament, who were also in convention as volunteer delegates, should go immediately deputed to the House of Commons then sitting in Dublin, there to make a motion on the question of parliamentary reform, introducing his own specific plan. His eloquence prevailed and the deputation was sent. The appearance of Mr. Flood, and of the delegates by whom he was accompanied, in their volunteer uniforms, in the Irish House of Commons, excited an extraordinary sensation. Those who were present, and who have given an account of the scene that ensued, describe it as violent and tumultuous in the extreme. On both sides the passions were worked up to a dangerous height. The debate lasted all night. "The *tempest*, for, towards morning, *debate* there was none, at last ceased." The question was put, and Mr. Flood's motion for reform in parliament was negatived by a very large majority. The

House of Commons then entered into resolutions declaratory of their fixed determination to maintain their just rights and privileges, against any encroachments whatever: — adding *that it was at that time indispensably necessary to make such a declaration.* Further, an address was moved, intended to be made the joint address of Lords and Commons to the throne, expressing their satisfaction with his Majesty's government, and their resolution to support that government, and the constitution, *with their lives and fortunes.* The address was carried up to the Lords, and immediately agreed to. This was done with the celerity of passion on all sides.

Meantime the armed convention continued sitting the whole night, waiting for the return of their delegates from the House of Commons, and impatient to learn the fate of Mr. Flood's motion. One step more, and irreparable, fatal imprudence might have been committed. Lord Charlemont, the president of the convention, felt the danger; and it required all the influence of his character, all the assistance of the friends of moderation, to prevail upon the assembly to dissolve, without waiting longer to hear the report from their delegates in the House of Commons. The convention had, in fact, nothing more to do, or nothing that they could attempt, without peril; but it was difficult to persuade the assembly to dissolve the meeting, and to return quietly to their respective counties and homes. This point, however, was fortunately accomplished, and early in the morning the meeting terminated.

I have heard my father say, that he ever afterwards rejoiced in the share he had in preserving one of the

chiefs of this volunteer convention from a desperate resolution, and in bringing the assembly to a temperate termination.*

After the termination of the convention, the hopes of those who desired a Parliamentary Reform were not abandoned; these revived at times with fresh energy, during the years 1784 and 1785. Soon after the peace there was a change of ministry. Mr. Pitt,

* The following pages were written by my father (in 1817) in the last year of his life. They add some details to the history of this transaction, and give his last review of the affair.

" I have been often urged by my family, to write an account of the political part of my life; but in fact it was during but a short period that I was ever engaged in politics. Twice only during my long life have I taken any active part in those great objects, which elicit the talents, and agitate the passions of mankind. The two great subjects of national discussion, which arose during my residence in Ireland, that called upon me to take a part in the politics of that country, were the attempt to obtain a parliamentary reform in 1783, and the question of a legislative union between Great Britain and Ireland in 1798.

" The history of the conventions, which were assembled for the purpose of obtaining a parliamentary reform, have been very imperfectly detailed in publications of no great merit, which appeared about that time when the business was an object of much party interest. In Lord Charlemont's life, written by Mr. Hardy, such circumstances as relate more immediately to Lord Charlemont are inserted; but Mr. Hardy had not the means of intimate or of impartial information. He was a man of retired habits; he was not a member of the convention; and he was particularly connected with friends, who were strongly interested in the continuance of that system, which gave patronage to the possessors of such boroughs as he represented in parliament. Lord Charlemont honoured me with something more than common intimacy. He had appointed me to be one of his aides-de-camp, when he acted as commander in chief of the volunteer army of Ireland: besides, he honored me with his private confidence, so that I had the means of knowing his objects and his wishes,

who, in his early days, while in opposition, had been one of the great advocates in England for Parliamentary Reform, became minister; and it was confidently expected by the Irish patriots, that he

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when he presided over the convention in Ireland in the year 1782.

"I was also well acquainted with the late Lord Bristol, Bishop of Derry, another of the leading men in that assembly. It happened, that I had known his Lordship on the continent, before the time of which I am now speaking. To know precisely the views of this extraordinary person was beyond my reach, and indeed I believe that they were not accurately known even to himself. Popularity with his own party, and in his own neighbourhood, and the eager desire to shew his power to perplex and to obstruct the party which he opposed, were among the motives that actuated his conduct: with these inferior considerations there was certainly a desire to improve the defective representation of the people. It is not my intention to discuss the practicability or prudence of the measures then proposed; I wish to do no more, than to leave to my family some account of my own conduct when I was a member of the convention, and also of the changes, which time, new facts, and further experience, have effected upon my opinions as to the great political problem of a reform in parliament—a problem which has exercised and divided the opinions of the wisest and the best men in the empire. From a cursory view of the statements, which were made to the convention of the parliamentary representation in Ireland in the year 1782, it appeared, and it was universally believed, that there was an enormous monopoly of power, enjoyed by a small number of individuals, in the management of public affairs, and in the disposal of preferments. This, and the great influence in the appropriation of the public money, could not fail to raise indignation in the minds of those, who felt themselves excluded from a participation in the advantages, which were thus exclusively consigned to a few, whose talents and virtues were not always superior to those of the generality of their fellow-citizens. This had excited a strong, and something like a republican desire, to reduce the members of the oligarchy of Ireland to a level with themselves; and the

would favour their efforts. Fresh meetings, congresses, and conventions, were held, at various times and places. During the Duke of Rutland's vice-regency much was expected. But the result of the

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ministers of the crown in England were not sorry to find some inroads made upon that confederacy, which had long, and in no small degree, constrained the authority of the Castle. Perhaps no assembly in any country ever contained more of the proprietors of the soil of the country, or of men of rank, influence, information, and real patriotism, than were collected upon this extraordinary occasion.

" The 10th of November, 1783, the volunteer convention assembled at the Rotunda in Dublin; and I venture to affirm, that there never was any assembly in the British empire more in earnest in the business on which they were convened, or less influenced by courtly interference or cabal. But the object was in itself unattainable.

" The idea of admitting the Roman Catholics to the right of voting for representatives was not urged even by the most liberal and most enlightened members of the convention; and the number, and wealth, and knowledge of Protestant voters in Ireland, could not decently be considered as sufficient, to elect an adequate and fair representation of the people.

" With respect to the question of parliamentary reform, it can scarcely be doubted, that some change in the borough system appeared desirable to men of the coolest judgment, and of the soundest principles; but I am ready to confess, that my own opinions then went farther than I can now (in 1817) approve. The idea of universal suffrage and of annual parliaments never was entertained by any reasonable person of that convention; but some of the best wishers to the constitution were led farther away from the influence of aristocracy than was prudent. The proceedings of the convention are in print, and the speeches of its members, though very ill reported, give some idea of the sentiments and views of the different parties, of which it was composed.

" I shall, however, mention a circumstance, which has not, I believe, been generally known. One of the last days of the convention, the Bishop of Derry (Lord Bristol) invited the most

whole was, that nothing was done. At one time the Lord Lieutenant said, he would transmit, as he was requested, certain Dungannon addresses; but that he could not do so without marking his dis-

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active of the members to a dinner. Before the bottle had made any considerable impression upon the company, it was proposed, that a motion should be made in the convention, for carrying up its petition to the door of the House of Commons, by the whole convention in their uniforms!

"I was the first person who opposed this proposition; and, fortunately for the country, all present became convinced of its rashness and illegality. I assert, positively, that *I was the person, who ventured, in a distinct manner, first to oppose this proposition.* I was well satisfied at the time, and I am now certain, that this was a plan, which the Bishop of Derry was eager to promote; and that the company then selected, and the dinner then given, were prepared for the express purpose of collecting a party, that would forward the measure in the convention. This dinner was given at the house of the nephew of the Bishop of Derry, Mr. George Robert Fitzgerald, of famous memory. It is a circumstance worth remarking, that Mr. Grattan and his lady dined with us, but retired very soon after dinner: this was managed by the Bishop, to give an importance to the meeting; for, had Mr. Grattan remained to hear the plan that was proposed, he would have reprobated the scheme with contempt and indignation.

"Some time after this circumstance took place, I heard more than one gentleman, who was of that company, claim the merit of having prevented the convention from going in arms to the House of Commons; and, what is extraordinary, I do believe, that each of these gentlemen was under some degree of self-delusion. I have now, however, before me a letter from the Bishop of Derry, written soon after the dissolution of the convention, reproaching *me* for having counteracted his wishes, and having rendered his plan abortive.

"Upon the whole, the rise, progress, and dissolution, of this extraordinary assembly, and of the volunteer army of Ireland, is a most singular political phenomenon, and will remain a lasting memorial of the good sense and loyalty of the gentlemen of Ireland.

"To cut off the rotten Irish boroughs and to substitute members

approbation of the unjust reflections thrown by them on his Majesty's parliament. At another time, the sheriffs of Dublin were fined by government, for calling or permitting a new meeting of volunteer delegates, for the purpose of pursuing this object of reform. Mr. Flood was repeatedly foiled in his attempts to bring forward the measure in Parliament. While there was any reasonable expectation of success, or while the object was pursued by any reasonable means, my father, convinced as he then was of its being a measure advantageous to his country, pursued it with uniform consistency, and zeal. At length the hopes of the reformists died away, and the attention of the volunteers and patriots turned to other objects.

From this time till he went into the Irish parliament, many years afterwards, my father took no further part in public affairs. And now, quitting a subject to which I am unused and unequal, I return, with pleasure, from politics to domestic life.

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chosen from rich and populous places in their stead, was a measure so consonant to common sense and common justice, as to require for its support neither oratory nor numbers. To remove an obvious cause of reproach, inconsistency, and criminality, from the legislature, and thus to uphold its dignity and justice, in the eyes of the people—was, in itself, an object well worthy the interference of true patriots; and would, if it had been adopted by the government of the country, have added force and real influence to the administration, without disturbing the economy of the constitution, or weakening the just power of the aristocracy."

CHAPTER III.

[FROM 1782–1789.

NEXT to biography written by the person himself, his private letters afford the best means of obtaining an insight into his character. But some readers, and those whose good opinion is most valuable, those of the most honourable minds, will recoil at the idea of publishing letters.—They need not here apprehend any breach of private confidence.—No one could have a greater horror than my father felt at the publication of private letters, such as have appeared in too many instances, unworthy of the characters of the illustrious dead, painful to the living, injurious to surviving families, and fit merely to gratify idle, or, worse than idle, malignant curiosity. With respect to the affairs of others, and to any confidence ever reposed in him, my father was too honourably exact to leave to chance, or to transfer to the discretion of any other person, that which had been exclusively entrusted to his own.

Two years before his death, he burned some thousands of letters, many of them most entertaining, and from persons of literary celebrity. He permitted Mrs. Edgeworth to snatch some of the late Dr. Darwin's from the flames; and she proved to him, upon looking these over, that no possible harm could

happen from their being preserved; but he persisted in burning the rest. He said, he felt that he should not have time to look over all his friends' letters, and that his mind could not feel at ease, unless those which he had not examined were destroyed. Many years previous to this time, Mr. Day had given him permission to make whatever use he thought proper of his letters; and some had been looked over for publication, when my father had thoughts of writing Mr. Day's life. Not one other letter — not a line in any letter, is here given to the public, by me, without permission from those surviving friends and near relations, who are the proper guardians of the fame of the dead.

With regard to his own letters, I should observe, that these are not published from *copies:* he kept copies only of letters of business. His letters to Mr. Day and Dr. Darwin were returned to us after their deaths: some of his to the late Mrs. Edgeworth were also entrusted to me; and from these I have selected a few, which have not any pretension to literary value, but which may show what were his habits of domestic life, and his occupations, during a long series of years.

During the years 1786 and 1787, he reclaimed considerable tracts of bog, and, with success and profit, improved a mountain farm. In carrying limestone for this improvement he made the first trial of wooden moveable railways, and small carriages with cast-iron wheels, supported on friction rollers; I find by the following passages in his letters he proposed, as early as the year 1786, to employ these moveable railways in public works in Ireland.

TO MRS. EDGEWORTH.

" *Dublin, Feb.* 1786.

" I gain ground over the incredulity of the good folks of this *great* capital, and they now begin to think it possible, to carry goods by a cheaper conveyance than an Irish car.

" I make no doubt, if I apply for a clause in an act of parliament, to permit me to lay railways, that I shall succeed. On all hands I am told, that my proposals are the fairest and most disinterested, that have been made by any man, or any set of men, in Ireland; and, indeed, I think they are.

" I attribute, my dear Bessy, your anxiety lest I should engage too ardently in this business to that true friendship and affection, which you invariably shew me upon every occasion of consequence; and I can only reply, that one word from you can at any time abate my application, or, if necessary, stop me in the midst of my career. " R. L. E."

TO THE SAME.

" *Dublin, 25th Feb.* 1786.

" A priori I decided, that it would be impossible, that I should be able to write to you to night; but experience always teaches me, that I *do* find time to write, if it be but one line, to my dearest and kindest friend.

" I have seen gentlemen of all sorts, upon my business, since I came to town, and have been much surprised at the extreme ignorance, which some of them have shewn, upon subjects where they are immediately concerned.

" No specific demand for coals is yet determined, but I think in a few days I shall be able to ascertain what may be done.

" I saw the Speaker* this evening at the House, and mentioned my idea of applying for a clause in the Navigation Act, to permit me to lay railways upon the banks of unfinished canals.

" He was particularly kind, and immediately mentioned it to several members with approbation; taking the opportunity to relate the success of the experiment on this subject, which I tried at his own house last summer.

" R. L. E."

* Right Honorable John Foster.

TO THE SAME.

" *Dublin, March* 30, 1786.

" Amongst the numerous proofs that you have given, and continue to give me, my dearest Bessy, of your confidence and affection, none strike me with more satisfaction, than the ease and spirit with which you write to me. A ray of health gleamed through your last, that gave me infinite pleasure; and the content and moderation, which you continue to express, gave me the most solid security for lasting happiness. I am fully persuaded, as much so as you can be, that more wealth might add care, but could scarcely make an addition of real enjoyment to our present situation.

" I believe, also, that I know how to estimate the transient breath of fame. But I never thought it wise, to repress what little enthusiasm might remain, after what I have seen of life. I know, that without it I must necessarily cease to act; and laborious employment, tending by degrees to some object of our wish, I firmly believe to be amongst the chief pleasures of existence.

" I doubt whether I ever wrote to you so much without a word of business. I will tell you, therefore, in three words — that I have finished and shewn a machine to the Speaker, that carries near four tons, and is moved by one man, and that I am taking out a patent. I have a prospect of a short, easy project in the county of Kildare, to try my plan upon, that will do me no great hurt if it fails. But I propose myself more happiness in returning home on Friday, than any project can bestow on your affectionate R. L. E."

TO DR. DARWIN.

" MY DEAR ERIEND AND DOCTOR,

" I set out to-morrow, to conclude the preliminaries of a bargain with the undertakers of a great iron-work, which is going to be established in this neighbourhood, for the carriage of all their ore, coals, &c. The quantity above 20,000 tons — the distance less than a mile. For this purpose, I lay railways, and use certain carriages of my own construction upon friction-wheels, &c., upon the principle of having a number of small carriages linked together, instead of using large machines and expensive railways. By this contrivance, I am enabled to

have slight moveable railways easily laid, and easily repaired, &c. &c.

" I have already applied these machines to the conveyance of lime-stone gravel, for improving ground, and have found them, from *two years* experience, (time enough to try their durability and wear and tear) highly profitable. When I have concluded my preliminaries, I will tell you the terms. Another more useful scheme that I have in view is, to carry marl two miles with this machinery, to improve 600 acres of coarse land, which has just, by the extinction of leases, fallen into my own hands. Such parts of it as have been limed pay 15*s.* per acre; unimproved, 3*s.* I hope to marl 200 acres next summer, at the expense of 10*s.* each; that is to say, if you will set my health up again."

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Fortunately before he engaged with the company, for whom he had prepared to lay his railways, he discovered, that they had then little to carry, and nothing to pay. By the use he made of this machinery on his own estate, he was recompensed for his trouble; and the success of his experiments in these first trials convinced him, that they would lead to future extensive benefit to the public.

About this time, one day when my father was standing upon a scaffold, giving directions to some masons, he was seized with a giddiness in his head, so sudden and violent, that he fell from the scaffold into an area beneath, many feet deep. The workmen thought that he was killed. Two of them, carrying him between them, brought him into the house. In a few moments, he relieved us from terror, by speaking in a cheerful tone and playful manner. He told us of a French marquis, who fell from a balcony, at Versailles, and who, as it was court politeness, that nothing unfortunate should ever be mentioned in the king's presence, replied to his majesty's inquiry, if he

was hurt by his fall, "Tout au contraire, Sire." To all our inquiries, whether he was hurt, my father replied, "Tout au contraire, mes amies." He assured us, that he thought the shock had been of use to his nerves,—that it would teach him to mind better what he was about, and to take better care of himself.

His cheerfulness quieted our fears for the time; but Dr. Darwin predicted, that the disease would terminate in jaundice. Meantime, though under the increasing pressure of a disorder, which is said to dispose the patient to be peculiarly inactive and desponding, he continued his usual employments, and even his amusements. We were just then preparing to act a little play; he was fitting up a theatre for us, and contriving a new manner in which the side scenes should turn on pivots, instead of sliding in the common method. But he was taken so ill, that he was forced to stop, and the next morning, the jaundice, in dreadful yellow, appeared. Dr. Darwin, who was of course immediately consulted, had a strong belief that almost all the distempers of the higher classes of people arise from drinking, in some form or other, too much vinous spirit. To this he attributed the aristocratic disease of gout, the jaundice, and all bilious or liver complaints; in short, all the family of pain. This opinion he supported in his writings with the force of his eloquence and reason; and still more in conversation, by all those powers of wit, satire, and peculiar humour, which never appeared fully to the public in his works, but which gained him strong ascendancy in private society. During his life-time, he almost banished wine from the tables of the rich of his acquaintance; and persuaded most of the gentry in his own and the neighbouring coun-

ties, to become water-drinkers. Partly in jest and partly in earnest, he expressed his suspicions, and carried his inferences on this subject, to a preposterous excess. When he heard that my father was bilious, he suspected, that this must be the consequence of his having, since his residence in Ireland, and in compliance with the fashion of the country, indulged too freely in drinking. His letter, I remember, contained a humorous philippic against "*vinous potation*," and concluded with—"Farewell, my dear friend. God keep you from whiskey—if he can."

To any one who knew my father, this must seem a laughable suspicion, for he was famous, or in those days, I may say, infamous, in Ireland, for his temperance.

TO DR. DARWIN.

"*Edgeworth-Town, Oct.* 23, 1786.

"We were all highly entertained and delighted with your letter. Mrs. E., because it relieved her from some apprehension; Miss E. because it was witty; and I, my dear Doctor, because it was wise. I cannot, however, help asking why the entire class of middling people in this country, who drink intemperately of whiskey-punch, are exempt from the gout, gravel, and stone. They are not often dropsical, and, for the most part, they live to an old age. Particular circumstances make me acquainted with this class of people, and, from many years experience, I assert, that they are, in the proportion of twenty to one, exempt from these diseases; and that there is not one, out of twenty, who does not drink *strong* vinous spirit. Many of them regularly take a glass, every morning, of spirits as strong as the best rum.

"All the lower class drink as much whiskey as they can get, and are, notwithstanding, strong and healthy!

"The gentlemen who drink wine, and eat luxuriously, are, on the contrary, afflicted with all the demons of disease, and flock to Bath and Spa, like regular birds of passage, every autumn.

"I have had three returns of my complaint * * * * * I have been surprised to find, that passing several sleepless nights in pain has not affected me on the succeeding days nearly so much, as want

of rest has done when I have been in better health. I shall, as soon as I am stronger, come down from three (rarely four) to one or two glasses of wine; indeed, when I am well, I seldom exceed two, FOR I love not that which you call vinous potation. I am as *notorious* for sobriety here, as *you* are in England.

"I wish I had obeyed your orders, and written on larger paper: for I want to tell you of the amazing profit obtained by the improvement of land in Ireland. Your procuring me an account of the best method of floating meadows shall be repaid by an accurate account of its success in this country. I suspect, that it depends chiefly upon the soil through which the water passes: the improvement of the land adjoining to peat-mosses, or, as we call them, turf-bogs, is the most profitable I have ever attempted. I think, where the ground is chosen with judgment, it brings in three years cent. per cent.

"A ditch canal would not do as well as *my* railways, for the manure must be carried sometimes up hill. A fire-balloon I had thought of; but upon calculation you will find, that it would not succeed. I congratulate you upon my friend, Dr. Robert* Darwin, being settled. I make no doubt of his abilities. A friend of mine, Mr. William Brooke, (now Dr. Brooke of Dublin) is gone to Edinburgh, where one word from you will serve him. His good sense and good conduct I will answer for.

"R. L. E."

FROM MR. DAY.

"1787.

* * * * * * * * * "After all I must confess, that my experience for some years past has made me look with great concern upon the perishable nature of human friendships. With by much the greater part of mankind the name means absolutely nothing; a traffic of interest or vanity; a league of knaves and fools—of sharpers and bubbles; a party of pleasure made in the morning, and broken off, with disgust at night; an agreement to travel in a post-chaise dissolved at the first inn by a squabble about the reckoning; a theatrical exhibition, where the two heroes strut about, and mouth their parts, and then retire to undress and abuse each other in the green-room. But the worst is, that even men of more ingenuous minds and liberal characters are not entirely

* Now Dr. Darwin, of Shrewsbury.

exempt from these general laws. If neither interest nor any other passion intervenes, still there will be different points of view, from which they consider the same object; and dissimilar perceptions can scarcely be reduced to any common measure. Even men of this description are subject to their passions, though of a nobler nature; and these passions are perpetually busy to alter the colours and magnitude of every object which they consider.

"For this defect of human nature I absolutely know no remedy. All that my reason furnishes me with upon the subject is, to contract the circle of my own wants and cares, and to trouble others as little as possible for any thing but strict justice; and even this is a commodity not to be easily had. In respect to those who honour me with their friendship, I study to make myself worthy of it, by such a kind of conduct as will never render their connexions with me a subject of disgrace or repentance.

"Whatever may be my precise opinions, I am generally ready, upon the most disinterested principles to do for them, at least as much as they can pretend to have experienced from others. If, after all, I am misunderstood, or misunderstand my own character, I am, I fear, too old to mend; because the fault must be in my original and simple perception of things, which cannot be rectified; and nothing remains for me, excepting to shrug my shoulders, with Brydone's poor Italians, and to cry 'Pazienza.'

"I am, with the greatest sincerity,

"Your affectionate friend,

"T. Day."

The rhetorical style of this, and of Mr. Day's letters in general, may, perhaps, give the idea of their being composed with care. On the contrary, he wrote them as fast as his pen could move: his usual manner in speaking resembled these letters. As the common people expressed it, Mr. Day always *talked like a book*—and I do believe he always thought in the same full-dress style. This was the result of the systematic care he had early taken, to make himself master of his native language, and to cultivate eloquence.

FROM MR. DAY.

" MY DEAR FRIEND, 1788.

" I must confess, that you are very right in saying, that I am always armed, and ready to repel aggression. I am conscious, that there is some truth in the charge, and the daily observations I make in the world do not tend to abate the disposition.

" I never expected any thing very romantic from my fellow-creatures, and have long confined myself to the lowest returns of good behaviour, or the commonest attentions of civility. Yet daily experience shews, that even this is too much to be expected from those, who make the greatest professions, and have most experienced your friendship. So wonderfully do events turn up, that I really am surprised that I am not become quite misanthropical, and alienated from the species. But this is certainly not the case, as I never was better humoured in my life, or more inclined to serve them, within certain moderate bounds.

" Much of this certainly arises from our forming our connexions rather from accident than judgment; and taking the next, rather than the most approved, as a subject for our social affections.

" I never was much inclined to believe in the agency of the Devil, nor do I now attribute so much to the malignity as to the folly of mankind.

" The general characteristic of our species is certainly levity and inconsistency. When they make the greatest quantity of professions, they frequently do not know themselves, that they neither feel, nor will perform one thousandth part of what they promise; and when they appear to act with the greatest degree of ingratitude, they are generally only treating you as they do their most essential interests: — Seeing men in this point of view, it is certainly very easy to forgive them, but not very easy to attribute much consistency, or dignity to their conduct.

" As to yourself, you very well know, I have always considered your conduct in the most disinterested light, and your attentions to me, as solely founded upon personal esteem and benevolence; therefore any of these reflections cannot, either directly or indirectly, carry with them any sarcastical inuendo. As to the characters of my particular friends, I cannot admit, or believe, that I have ever been much deceived. * * * * * *

" But men, as they advance in life, pursue dissimilar studies,

and contract incongruous habits, which render them less fit for each other's society. Thus, a gradual strangeness takes place without one party being more blameable than another. Since our gratitude must depend not upon our judgment but our habitual intimacy,—upon habitual feelings of pain or pleasure; and it is as impossible to like a certain set of manners, as it is to like a certain set of features—when they are habitually displeasing.

"In this case, I think nothing more natural and rational, than for people to pursue their own plans and amusements at a distance, and to slip their necks out of the collar, when they do not relish the weight. * * * * * * * * I own, that my observations have made me depend much more upon my own judgment than I used to do; because, weak and fallible as I must confess this to be, I am not sure of meeting with more impartiality elsewhere. I may, indeed, be totally wrong in all my judgments, but this opinion would prevent my acting at all. Nor could I have any better reason for believing implicitly in the judgment of another, than in my own.

"I cannot help digressing here, to propose a curious argument, derived from this principle, against the church of Rome—which I do not remember to have seen. He that asserts the infallibility of another, must also assert his own; otherwise he may be deceived in the judgment he makes of that infallibility, as well as in any other judgment. But if he allow, that all his own judgments are fallible, and may be erroneous, then his particular opinion of the infallibility may be erroneous too, unless he can shew a particular reason for the exception. In this manner it may be shewn, that the real confidence every man has in his own judgment is much the same, since it must always precede his having a confidence in any one else.

"Like Montaigne, I have almost written my essay without coming to the subject of it. * * * * * * * * *

"Sincerely and affectionately yours,

"T. Day."

The subject, to which he alludes, relates to private affairs, and therefore the conclusion of this letter is omitted. The general opinion he gave was, that generosity in pecuniary matters is more frequently injurious than beneficial, both to those who practise

it, and to those who are its object. He had, by this time, brought himself to think, that assisting or promising to assist friends, who have been imprudent, only encourages extravagance or carelessness, and excites unreasonable expectations. Struck with the great change which appeared in Mr. Day's sentiments, compared with those of his youth, my father wrote to him as follows:

TO MR. DAY.

"MY DEAR FRIEND, 1788.

* * * "You say, with great truth, that it is much wiser to withhold our promises, and to do whatever good we can from the impulse of occurrences, rather than from the obligation of a contract. * * * * * * * * As to the general question of what one should do for one's friends in any given situation, every thing relative to supererogatory duties must depend upon the feelings of the person who thinks himself called upon, and not upon the judgment of indifferent spectators. These feelings must vary infinitely, as well from the degree of intimacy, as from the former experience of each individual. I neither wish to lessen you, nor to pay myself a compliment, in supposing, that we may be naturally equally disposed to generosity; but during the course of our lives, our manner of exerting this quality has been different. You had early in life the command of money; and, from your very childhood, you were certain of having a considerable fortune to dispose of, when you should come of age. Your schoolfellows were not in the same situation, and you found premature occasions for bestowing favors amongst persons, not your equals either in fortune or benevolence. This continued through a large portion of your life. The wants of some, and the ingratitude of others, disgusted you, and taught you at last to be more circumspect in future. I suppose you have given away, at least, ten times as much as I have done; and I believe, that you have met with *twenty* times more ingratitude. Our experience, therefore, leads us necessarily to different conclusions. I think, that perhaps twice out of thrice I shall be ill treated. You think, that you will be ill used nine times out of ten.

"Another circumstance leads me to more confidence than you

are disposed to. I have generally found means to execute whatever I have engaged to do; and I am, therefore, more inclined to form engagements, than, I believe, on cool reflection, prudence would permit. I have also habituated my vanity to be more pleased with executing an engagement, than with doing an extempore favor. I feel my enthusiasm increase from the moment I begin what I have once engaged to execute. I can trace the cause of this feeling to my mother's precepts. She early warned me of the violence of my temper, and of my passions; and, with true prudence, excited my ambition to a steady performance of whatever I might begin.

"You apologize for a desultory letter: What must I do?—though you are certainly the ablest critic, and by far the best writer of my acquaintance, I never could bring myself to think of the manner in which I write to you. My opinions always produce themselves before you, without any exertion of my own. A certain sense of equality and independence has always prevented me from yielding to your judgment on one hand, or opposing it, with obstinacy, on the other.

"Adieu.—Yours,
"R. L. E."

FROM MR. DAY.

Anningsley, 1789.

* * * * * * * "Relative to the subject of farming, I should almost look upon your desire for information as a boast of superiority: for I think you must be sufficiently acquainted with the principle of it in England, to know, that gentlemen are much more likely to lose, than to gain 40 per cent.—I will however give you the detail you desire, with all the precision possible.

In the first place then, I am out of pocket every year about 300*l.* by the farm I keep. The soil I have taken in hand, I am convinced, is one of the most completely barren in England. The estate is certainly improved in value by what I have done; but were it to be let, I do not imagine that it would pay 2 per cent. for all that I have laid out, probably not above one. You may perhaps wonder, I should persevere in such a losing trade; and, to avoid future explanation, I will give it you now. I am particularly pleased with the study of agriculture; and the constant business, which so large a farm creates, gives me the most agreeable interest in the world.—It gives me a continual object in going out: and the

necessary trouble of governing so many men, and providing for so many animals, keeps my mind from stagnating in solitude. By these means I am enabled to live happily, with a perfect independence of my fellow creatures; for the succession of employments is such, that my whole life is taken up, without fatigue, or ennui.

"Were I to give up farming, I should have less care, but I should also become more sedentary; and the very absence of that care, which now never rises to any thing like uneasiness, would expose me infinitely more to hypochondriacism, which I am now totally free from. I have besides another very material reason, which is, that it enables me to employ the poor; and the result of all my speculations about humanity is, that the only way of benefiting mankind is to give them employment, and make them *earn* their money. Besides this, I have even a very substantial motive of interest: I do not want to practise the *obliquity* of great accumulations, but I now think, that every wise man will rather improve his circumstances, as it is almost impossible not either to improve or to diminish. I take care to live within my income, and while I spend large sums in employing the poor, they are not entirely lost. I am continually improving the quality of my lands, and the conveniences of my estate. Buildings, planting, every kind of improvement, I chuse to pay for out of my income. I consider the pleasure of every thing to lie in the pursuit; and therefore, while I am contented with the conveniences I enjoy, it is a matter of indifference whether I am five or twenty years in completing my intended plans. This scheme also is connected with my own particular temper; for doing nothing with relation to the opinion of others, and every thing from a thorough knowledge of my own tastes and feelings, I do nothing that does not permanently please me.

"There is also another very ample source of future profit, in the very large plantations I am continually making, and which in no very long space of time will probably more than double the value of my estates. Nor are these improvements confined to the spot where I live: I have purchased about 500 acres of indifferent land in the neighbourhood, the greater part of which I am covering with plantations. Most of the farmers, indeed all, are by particular circumstances extremely dependent upon me. I have lost something by the acquisition of this dependence, for you may easily conjecture, that the price of it has been uncommon forbearance in respect to their rents. But I do not know, that I have lost more

than I should have done by turning them out of their farms. Some of them are honest, industrious men, who pay their rents well, but are near the expiration of their leases. These I continue upon their farm without any addition to their rent—with the condition only of letting me yearly plant a small quantity of their farms. By these means, I have not a farm, whose value will not in time be doubled or trebled. I have purchased all these within the last six years, and have taken care to make purchases, where I could have a large extent of land for little money; by all these precautions the general value of my property is increasing yearly. Were they to be sold, all these plantations would much enhance their value; and should they not change hands, it will be many years before my first plantation will require thinning; and from that era there will be a certain produce, increasing yearly in value, till in time it would amount, I should suppose, to more than the income of my present fortune. * * * And now having given you all the information you require, I beg leave to rest my wearied pen, and to subscribe myself

"Affectionately yours,
"T. Day."

FROM MR. E. TO MR. DAY.

In answer to his complaining of the ingratitude of some inferior person, to whom he had shewn kindness.

* * * * * * "You have certainly seen repeatedly, that persons of low habits are never thankful for improvement, comfort, or convenience; but are caught and chained to you by finery, and an introduction into higher life, and greater airs and graces than they had been used to.

"Young people cannot, whilst they are young—and fools cannot, even when old, estimate life with any tolerable accuracy. Their common error is, to attend more to what they hear, than what they feel. And, as they hear almost every body talk with rapture of rank, public diversions, dress, and equipage, they place their hopes of happiness on these objects; and become, at length, so accustomed to pursue them, that, long after they are undeceived as to their real value, they continue the chase, without the slightest appetite for its object.

"We have had, my dear friend, very different fortunes in life. You began with more sanguine hopes of friendship. Not having lived with any person older than yourself, whose abilities you

relied upon, you did not hear with the same ears the continual admonitions, that the old dispense upon the frailty of friendship. I have had very few friends; and those I chose amongst my equals in fortune: I remember well, in a lane, near Hare-Hatch, my foretelling, that our attachment was likely to continue, because it was probable, that we should never be in very different stations of life, and, therefore, that we should not be separated by interest or fashion. All this family send their best wishes to you and to Mrs. Day.

"I am, your sincere Friend,

"RICHARD LOVELL EDGEWORTH."

A very short time after the preceding letter was sent, my father received one with the usual post-mark of Mr. Day's letters; but the direction was written in a stranger's hand, with "*to be sent immediately*" on the cover.

The change in my father's countenance, when he opened it, I never can forget.

It brought the dreadful intelligence, that Mr. Day had been killed by a fall from his horse. This excellent man was, at last, a victim to his own benevolence. Having observed, that horses suffer much in the breaking, from the brutality of common horse-breakers, he had endeavoured, by gentle means, to train a horse for himself; but it was not well broken. It took fright at some one winnowing corn near the road, plunged, and threw him. He had a concussion on the brain; never spoke after his fall; and in less than a quarter of an hour expired!

This account was received from one of Mrs. Day's nephews, who concluded his letter with these words:—

"You, Sir, and Mr. Keir, are the persons whom Mr. Day has selected from his friends, to be his executors, as possessing the greatest probity and superiority of understanding. Mrs. Phillips

(Mr. Day's mother) and my aunt (Mrs. Day) have commissioned me to write to you, begging you will come over with all possible expedition, after the receipt of this letter; they not being able to settle any of his affairs, till they have the pleasure of seeing you."

To this my father replied,—

"Sir, *Oct.* 8, 1789.

"My wife lay in last night, but nothing shall delay me from the melancholy duty to which I have been appointed by my friend.

"Your obedient servant,

"R. L. Edgeworth."

He set out instantly, but before he sailed for England he enquired at the post-office in Dublin, if there were any English letters for him. There was a second letter from Mrs. Day's nephew, apologising for the precipitancy of his first—hoping my father had not taken a useless journey—telling him, that he was not Mr. Day's executor, and informing him, that the first letter had been written merely from Mrs. Day's having taken it for granted, that her husband had executed a new will, of which he had spoken to her, and in which she thought that he had appointed Mr. Edgeworth and Mr. Keir his executors; but that, on search being made, no such paper was to be found;—that the will executed in the year 1780 was the only testament which appeared; this was lying open in his bureau; and by which he left every thing to Mrs. Day, with the exception of a few legacies, appointing her sole executrix. This letter to my father concluded with,—"Mr. Day has not once mentioned your name, Sir, in the will." To which my father replied:

"SIR,

"I have this moment received your letter. If I did not think I possessed a place in Mr. Day's heart, I should be mortified; but I feel no disappointment in not being mentioned in his will.

"I have an excellent picture of Mr. Day by Wright; if Mrs. Day should wish for it, it is at her service: she may be sure no other person shall have it, but one of my own children. Give her this message, with my best respects. I have called my new born son Thomas Day, and I hope his name may excite him to imitate the virtues of my excellent friend.

"I am, &c.

"RICHARD LOVELL EDGEWORTH."

It was fortunate, that my father did not sail the day he had intended, for the vessel in which he was to have taken his passage to Parkgate, was lost.

An amazing defalcation appeared in Mr. Day's property. It proved nearly twenty thousand pounds less, than he had stated it to my father a few years previous to his death. At the time of the American war he had apprehended, that there would have been a national bankruptcy; and under this dread he had sold out of the stocks, and had consulted my father as to the best mechanical means of concealing money. A very considerable sum had been buried under the floor of the study in his mother's house at Barehill. This, to her knowledge, Mr. Day afterwards took up, and placed again in the public funds at the return of peace.

Considering the great deficiency that appeared in the property, my father suggested, that some of his money might be still concealed, and offered to go over to England, to assist in a search; but the offer was declined; he was assured, that the most diligent search had been made, and that nothing had been found. It ought to be here stated, for the honor of

Mr. Day's memory, that, notwithstanding any expressions in his last letter, seemingly tending more to misanthropy than beneficence, he had always continued to act in the most bountiful manner. He had given away by hundreds and thousands, to an amount which one of his intimate friends told Mrs. Day, "that even she, with all her knowledge of his benevolence, could scarcely imagine." Whatever might have been the defalcations in his fortune, and whatever its amount at his death, there was no doubt of his having intended to have made a different and new disposition of his property.

Mrs. Day wrote to my father, inquiring if he knew of any legacy intended for himself. It had happened, that Mr. Day had before his marriage promised to leave to his friend his library, which was very extensive; but my father would accept from Mrs. Day only some mathematical instruments, which to her were useless, and to him valuable, from old recollections of former times. The library he neither claimed nor would accept, because he thought, that it should now belong to Mrs. Day, to whom, both from her literary tastes, and from her affection for her husband, it must be peculiarly dear. It is worth while to mention this circumstance, in order to give the words, in which Mrs. Day expressed her sense of this attention to her feelings, and her strong and tender affection for her husband.

"MY DEAR MR. EDGEWORTH,

* * * * * * * "I will ingenuously own, that of all the bequests Mr. Day could have made, the leaving his whole library from me would have mortified me the most, indeed more than if he had disposed of all his other property, and left me only that. My ideas of him are so much associated with his books, that to part with

them would be, as it were, breaking some of the last ties, which still connect me with so beloved an object. The being in the midst of books he has been accustomed to read, and which contain his marks and notes, will still give him a sort of *existence* with *me*. Unintelligible as such fond chimeras may appear to many people, I am persuaded they are not so to you." * * * *

Generous people understand each other. Mrs. Day, of a noble disposition herself, always distinguished in my father the same generosity of disposition. She had, she said, ever considered him as "the most purely disinterested and proudly independent of Mr. Day's friends." She therefore consulted him in all her affairs after she became a widow, and he had the satisfaction of seeing, that she kept every promise which her husband had made, and, as far as she was able, fulfilled even the expectations that he had raised.

Anxious to pay honor due to the memory of his friend, my father, soon after Mr. Day's death, determined to write his life. At that time he was more in the habit of speaking than of writing. It was his custom to throw out, in conversation, his first thoughts upon any subject on which he was intent. I wrote them down either in my own words, or in his. The beginning of his life of Mr. Day was spoken to me one morning when we were out riding; and the moment I came in, I wrote down the following words, which, I can affirm, were as nearly as possible as they came from my father's lips.

"In the first emotions of grief and affection, which we feel for the loss of a friend, it is natural to imagine, that, could we represent to others the image, which exists in our own mind, we should necessarily command their sympathy in our sorrow for the dead.

"We fondly persuade ourselves, that the private virtues and

talents of our lost friend would excite general enthusiasm; that his temper, character, and even his personal peculiarities, must become interesting; and that every circumstance of his life is worthy to be recorded.

"Under the influence of such feelings, many persons are induced to become biographers. But private lives, like family pictures, are valuable only to a few individuals, and, like these, are gradually consigned to oblivion. To preserve a portrait to posterity, it must either be the likeness of some celebrated individual, or it must represent a face, which, independently of peculiar associations, corresponds with the universal idea of beauty. So the pen of the biographer should portray only those, who by their *public* have interested us in their *private* characters; or who, in a superior degree, have possessed the virtues and mental endowments, which claim the general love and admiration of mankind.

"Immediately after the death of the late Thomas Day, when I first thought of writing his life, perhaps I might have been under the influence of the partial feelings I have described. But the coolest reflections of my understanding have determined me, to pursue the first impulse of my heart.

"Mr. Day was indeed distinguished for the noblest private virtues, but more especially as a philosopher and politician; as a public character he claims the honor of public eulogium.

"Perhaps it will be thought, that, as his intimate friend, I should not trust myself with such a task; but I dare to rely upon my own impartiality; certain that I shall feel proud to produce the faithful likeness of such a man, without any temptation to correct nature, either from tenderness or presumption."

When my father had nearly completed this life of Mr. Day, hearing that another friend, Mr. Keir, was engaged in a similar undertaking, he gave up his own intentions, and sent to him whatever materials he thought would be of use to him.

TO MR. KEIR.

"MY DEAR SIR, *Edgeworth Town*, 1790.

"I send you the papers which you desire. It is proper to mention, that I had Mrs. Day's approbation of my undertaking,

conveyed in the most obliging manner. But I lay down my pen, fully convinced, that with the same materials you will do much higher honor to your friend's memory.

"The anecdotes which I send you are very few; but they are all I could select to suit your plan, as we differ so materially in our ideas of private biography. You believing, that nothing but what concerns the public should be published; I thinking, that to entertain mankind is no inefficacious method of instructing them. When Mason was reproached by somebody for publishing the private letters of Gray, he answered, 'Would you always have my friends appear in full dress?' I might quote Plutarch as well as Mason in support of my opinion; but I am sure you must perceive, my dear sir, that I am not willing to enter into any literary competition with you, well knowing my inferiority.

"R. L. E."

At the time I could not help regretting, that my father's life of his friend, warm from his heart, was suppressed. But all was for the best. I find that most of the interesting and characteristic circumstances of Mr. Day's life are preserved in my father's own memoirs; and there the characters of the two friends, so different in tastes, yet so agreeing in principle; so opposite in all appearance, yet so attached in reality; mutually illustrate and do honour to each other. Mr. Day's letters in later life further tend to portray his character to the last days of his existence, and they do honour to his private virtues. To his public conduct and to his writings Mr. Keir has done ample justice.

It is remarkable that Mr. Day's fame with posterity will probably rest solely upon those works, which he considered as most perishable. He valued in preference to his other writings, certain political tracts; but these, though finely written, full of manly spirit and classic eloquence, have passed away, and are heard of no more. While his "History of Sandford

and Merton," and even the tiny story of "Little Jack," are still popular. Wherever children are to be found, these will continue interesting and useful from generation to generation. For the same reason, because true to nature and to general feeling, his poem of "*The Dying Negro*" will last as long as manly and benevolent hearts exist in England.

My father has, in the first part of these memoirs, given many instances of his friend Mr. Day's peculiar character. The most remarkable of these relate to his romantic plan of educating a young girl to be his wife. Whoever has been interested for Sabrina Sidney, as she was named, will be glad to know what became of her after Mr. Day's marriage.

She went to reside with a lady in the country, and had lived retired for some years, till she was addressed by a gentleman, who had known her from childhood. The reader may recollect its being mentioned, that, when Mr. Day first selected her from a number of other children, his friend, Mr. John Bicknel, was present; and, in fact, was the person who decided his choice in favour of Sabrina. As she grew up, however, Mr. Bicknel thought so little of her, that he often expressed to my father his surprise, that "his friend Day could be so smitten with Sabrina—he could not, for his part, see any thing extraordinary about the girl, one way or other." When my father praised her voice and manner, Mr. Bicknel only shrugged his shoulders.

Time went on, till Mr. Day's passion for Sabrina, as it has been seen, was sacrificed to philosophy, or she became the victim to some jealous misunderstanding. Mr. Bicknel then pitied her, but rejoiced in his friend's more suitable marriage with Miss Milnes.

Of Sabrina Mr. Bicknel saw nothing more for many years afterwards. He lived in London, partly engaged by pleasure, and partly pursuing his profession of the law. That he was a man of shining talents, his share in the "Dying Negro" is alone sufficient to prove—he had not only poetic taste, but great wit and acuteness. His competitors at the bar, many of whom are now exalted in their profession, were at their first setting out esteemed much inferior to him in abilities. But he had some of the too usual faults of a man of genius; he detested the drudgery of business. He is said to have kept briefs an unconscionable time in his pocket, or on his table, unnoticed. Attorneys complained, but still he consoled himself with wit, literature, and pleasure, till health as well as attorneys began to fail. Then he thought more seriously; and, considering that it would be a comfort to secure a companion for middle life, and a friend, perhaps a nurse, for his declining years, he determined to marry. Suddenly he recollected Sabrina; inquired if she were living, if she were married or unmarried, and asked how she had conducted herself during the long interval since they had met. He found that she was unmarried, living with a lady in the country, and that she had uniformly behaved so as to deserve the respect, and to conciliate the regard of all who knew her. Mr. Bicknel went down immediately to the part of the country where she resided.—Saw her, and saw her with very different eyes from those, with which he had looked upon her formerly—fell desperately in love—proposed, and was conditionally accepted. *Conditionally*, for Mr. Day, her friend and benefactor, was to be consulted. She declared, that she would not marry any man without

his consent. My father, whom she considered also as a guardian, was consulted: he was surprised, when he first heard of this intended marriage; and when he perceived by the tone of the letters, that Mr. Bicknel was so desperately in love with a lady, whom he had, for so many years seen with indifference. His office of guardian had long since ceased; the parties were at years of discretion; and, as their friend, he saw no objection to the match, except that Mr. Bicknel's health might fail, and that his application might not be sufficient to secure, by his profession, a maintenance for a family. This objection appeared much more alarming to Mr. Day, than to my father, who always looked to the hopeful side of human affairs; and who believed that no motive could be stronger or more likely to make a man exert himself, than the desire of providing for a woman he loved.

Mr. Bicknel and Sabrina married; and more than half my father's hopes were realized. Mr. Bicknel did exert himself, and Sabrina made him an excellent wife. In many of Mr. Bicknel's subsequent letters, he spoke of his wife and children, with all the delight of the most happy husband and father. But his health failed—he lived scarcely three years after his marriage, and poor Sabrina, after this short period of felicity, was left unprovided for, with two infant sons. Some deplored her having married, conceiving that she was now more unhappy for the felicity she had transiently enjoyed. But this was not my father's doctrine. Two years of happiness he thought a positive good secured, which ought not to be a subject of regret, and should not embitter the remainder of life. Indeed, the system of rejecting

present happiness, lest it should, by contrast, increase the sense of future pain, would fatally diminish the sum of human enjoyment; it would bring us to the absurdity of the stoic philosophy, which, as Swift says, "would teach us to cut off our feet, lest we should want shoes."

Mrs. Bicknel never repented of her marriage. Many distinguished characters at the bar, friends of her husband, after his death shewed their regard for him by kindness to his widow. Mrs. Day in particular, feeling that Sabrina had peculiar claims to her sympathy, constantly continued her assistance and friendship. The health of Mrs. Day had, previous to her husband's death, been precarious. It rapidly declined. My father fearing that it was suffering, and might fatally suffer, by want of exertion at her great irreparable loss, wrote to her the following letter.

"MY DEAR MRS. DAY, 1790.

"YOUR letters are very kind, and I assure you sincerely, that your conduct towards me has given me more pleasure, than any thing has given me since the loss of my friend.

"I am, however, my dear Madam, sensibly concerned at the continuance of your despondence: you will remember, that hitherto I have not attempted to use any argument, nor employed any persuasion, to excite the powers of your mind to exertion. I thought rest and time were necessary; but rest and time may fix habits of sorrow, and weaken every excellent faculty of your soul.

"I have suffered a loss, which was to me as severe as any loss could be to any person of common judgment and affections; and I always perceived, that the idea most prevalent in my mind was, to act and govern myself as she would approve, if she could secretly read my soul, and see my actions. Her dying commands to me all sprang from the generous wish, that I should be happy, though she must cease to be the immediate source of my felicity.

"Ten years are nearly elapsed since I lost her, and her merit, fondness, wisdom, attention to my children, sympathy with all

my feelings; the similarity of our tastes, the unbounded confidence which subsisted mutually between us; have never for one day been absent from my grateful remembrance. She breathed her last, smiling, in my arms. Her lifeless form was laid, by her sacred orders, with my own hands, in the last repository of mortality. I attended her to the very grave, and when I saw her covered for ever from my sight, I felt the pangs which nature has made inevitable. But from the moment that I was capable of reflection, I endeavoured by every exertion of my soul, to regain not only tranquillity, but happiness.

"The best of parents was lost to children, that promised to become happy in themselves, and useful to society. The best of wives was lost to a husband, capable of feeling the high value of such a woman. But I knew, that, were my beloved Honora to see me drowned in unavailing sorrow, incapable of the duties of a father and of a man, she would feel indignation at my weakness; and far from accepting the tribute of my grief as a sacrifice due to her exalted merit, she would think herself degraded by lamentations, that are bestowed by common characters upon the commonest occasions.

"Whenever that hour comes, when I must separate from a wife, who far exceeds the promises of her generous sister, and from the intelligent gratitude of my children, I shall conjure them, to shed no tears over my tomb, except such as burst from the first passion of shocked humanity; but to supply my place in society, to carry on the designs, which I had begun with their approbation—to continue that union, which I had formed amongst them for their mutual happiness—to honor me by their actions—to rejoice in remembering me—to speak of me, if I deserve it, with exultation, not with sorrow—to impute my faults to defects in my education: to remember, only to avoid them. To believe from my assertions, perhaps also from their own observation, that I had made, even late in life, improvements in my temper and character; and never to forget, that they might do the same every succeeding year of their lives. This is the honor, which I hope for after death. Let this be the affectionate remembrance of my friends.

* * * * * * * * * *

No more remains of this letter; nor does it appear what effect it had upon Mrs. Day's mind. She survived her husband about two years.

Of her exemplary conduct as a wife, my father has given his testimony; and a single passage in one of her letters, after she became a widow, sufficiently proves the warmth and permanence of her attachment to his memoirs.

I cannot quit this subject, however, without repeating, that my father, from his own experience, and from all his observations, strongly advised young married people not to follow or attempt the plan of living secluded from society. Perhaps this caution may seem superfluous in the present state of manners, where people in general are more inclined to be too fond of the dissipation of the world, than prone to retirement; but there are still ingenuous minds of strong affections, and a romantic cast, who will be struck with Mr. Day's noble character, and who might consequently be misled in this particular by his example.

CHAPTER VI.

Not long after the death of his friend Mr. Day, my father was threatened with another, and a still more severe misfortune, the loss of the only daughter left to him by his beloved wife Honora. From her infancy she had been the object of fond hope. Of high promise, both of personal beauty and intellectual excellence, incessant and most successful care had been taken in her education; but in the midst of these hopes, before she was fifteen, she was seized by hereditary consumption. From the beginning of her illness, experience of her mother's fate made her father too fully aware of the nature of her disease.

A few months before her death, in one of his letters to Mrs. Day, he says:

* * * "The loss of my best friend must be followed by the loss of my most excellent daughter Honora. Her ripened beauty, her cheerful serene temper, uncommon understanding—all the hopes of her family, by all of whom she is admired and adored—the expectations of all who have ever seen her—must now be blasted. The hand of hereditary disease is upon her, which must soon be inevitably followed by the hand of Death. With the same fortitude which her incomparable mother possessed, she bears the present, and prepares for the future."

Honora died just when she had attained her fifteenth year. It was the first loss of a child my father had sustained.

In sorrow the mind turns for comfort to our earliest

friends. He went to that sister, whom he mentions in the first part of these memoirs as the favorite companion of his childhood. Their friendship continued a blessing to both in every circumstance of life. With her he had all that could be done for his consolation by sympathy, by the strong charm of similarity of temper and character, and the stronger charm of association with scenes of youth and early affection. But, as he said, "For real grief, there is no sudden cure. All *human* resource is in time and occupation."

FROM DR. DARWIN.

"DEAR EDGEWORTH, *Derby*, 1790.

"I MUCH condole with you on your late loss. I know how to feel for your misfortune. The little Tale you sent me is a prodigy, written by so young a person*, with such elegance of imagination.

"*Nil admirari* may be a means to escape misery, but not to procure happiness. There is not much to be had in this world—we *expect* too much.

"I have had my loss also! The letter of Sulpitius to Cicero is fine eloquence, but comes not to the heart; it tugs, but does not draw the arrow. Pains and diseases of the mind are only cured by Time. Reason but skins the wound, which is perpetually liable to fester again.

"I am much obliged to you for your second hygrometer, which is very ingenious. Yet I prefer the former, as being simpler, easier to make, and easier to compare with some third criterion, as by soaking the wood first, and then baking it, and thus making two points of comparison. This also is more certain, than where the friction of pullies is concerned.

Your three wards were a week with us at Easter. I mention it, to add, that I think them all fine, sensible, good humored boys; and they seemed so grateful for the little notice taken of them by Mrs. Darwin that she quite admires them.

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* The Tale alluded to was "*Rivuletta*," a little fairy tale written by Honora E., published in "Early Lessons."

" I will some time make a shelf for your animal to walk upon, and he shall have a walk for a year or two, at two inches a month; but I prefer old *long-back* for a race, and would wager him against *brazen-wheels* for a cool hundred.

" I should be very happy to see you this summer, if any thing here can attract such a comet from its orb, and bring any of your family. " Yours truly,

" E. D."

The first, the only agreeable thing, which I recollect about this time, was the arrival of Dr. Darwin's Botanic Garden. My father's delight and enthusiasm, when he read it, his feeling for poetry, and for his friend, can be expressed only in his own words:

TO DR. DARWIN.

" *Edgeworth-Town*, 1790.

" It is sometimes, my dear Doctor, a very difficult task for a man to know what to say, when he reads a work written by a friend. His honesty and his affection are often cruelly at variance; and he must either appear a vile flatterer, or an unkind friend.

" This is not the difficulty I feel. I am rather in the ridiculous situation of Lightfoot, in the Fairy Tales, who was obliged to tie his legs to restrain his speed. I have felt such continued, such increasing admiration in reading the " Loves of the Plants," that I dare not express my enthusiasm, lest you should suspect me of that tendency to exaggeration, with which you used to charge me. I may, however, without wounding your delicacy, say, that it has silenced for ever the complaints of poets, who lament that Homer, Milton, Shakspeare, and a few classics, had left nothing new to describe, and that elegant imitation of imitations was all that could be expected in modern poetry.

I have seen nobody since it has been published, except my own family; and amongst my domestic critics, who are not readily pleased, I hear nothing but praise and congratulation.

To have my name in a note in your work is, in my opinion, to have it immortal; and, as Mrs. E. says,

" If it's allowed to poets to divine,
" One half of round eternity is mine."

"I rejoice at all events, my dear Doctor, that I sent you the progressive hygrometer, before I saw your book; as you will impute my sending it somewhat less to vanity, and somewhat more to kindness.

"Montgolfier, Lina, and Gossypia, are perfectly new in their ideas. Montgolfier is sublime: — you have not let him strike his head against the stars like Horace; but have made respectful planets recede, to give him place. I would rather have your praise, were I Montgolfier, or Howard, than all the inscriptions or statues of inscribers and academicians.

"My daughter says, that the manner, in which you mention your friends in your poem, shews as much generosity, as your descriptions shew genius.

"But I will stop.——

"I read the description of the Ballet of Medea to my sisters, and to eight or ten of my own family. It seized such hold of my imagination, that my blood thrilled back through my veins, and my hair broke the cementing of the friseur, to gain the attitude of horror. The ghost in Hamlet, by the by, only raised the unconstrained locks of an ill-combed Dane. To force nature through the obstructions of art, is quite another thing.

"My dear Doctor, I will make this fulsome letter a little more palatable by a few verbal criticisms. I know you do not disdain the labor of correcting your poetry: — Maria says, that, even with the help of genii, man can do nothing without some labor; for Aladdin's lamp required to be rubbed quite bright, before the genius obeyed.

"I remark, that the *quantity* of Landau, b. 1, l. 344, is unusual. — B. 1, l. 159, I believe the axle of a weather-cock is usually fixed. If I go farther, don't say *ne sutor*—. L. 165 — I don't like Moore of Moore Hall. It is associated with burlesque. I object to l. 290, the vegetable lamb, ending the line. * * * * * *

"If you encourage me, I will give you all my ill-natured remarks on the other cantoes.

"Pray, Doctor, flatter me so far as to remember, that the first lines I saw of this poem excited my enthusiasm; and that whilst I sleep, or curse, over many other descriptive poems, I shout applause, when I hear yours.

"*Qu.* Would not the following ideas suit you? — The creation of climate in hot-houses, and ice-houses — The worship of Mercury to the Sun and Juno, in the thermometer and the barometer —

Salmoneus and Franklin—Chaos and the Fata Morgana—The *Spectra* of castles—Swinbourne's Travels.—Have you seen Mr. Keir's life of our friend?—In Mr. K.'s letters to me, about Mr. Day's life, he spoke of my mentioning Sabrina as *impossible*. I now find he has changed his opinion. What can the life of a private man consist of, but of private circumstances?

"The *author* appears best in his works.—Adieu.

"R. L. E.

"P. S. I have just read *Papyra*, and would I had more paper, on which to praise her! You have immortalized one friend, who feels his own insignificance. Pray rescue Mr. Day from oblivion. He named you as one of the three friends, from whom he had met with constant kindness. Forgive me this once, for not knowing how much paper I should want!"

DR. DARWIN IN ANSWER.

"*Derby*, 1790.

"Your last letter is very flattering to me indeed. It was your early approbation that contributed to encourage me to go on with the poem. The first part is longer than the second, and two of my critical friends think it will be more popular.

"I wish it were possible for me, to shew you the MS. for your criticisms; but I dare not trust it, especially as I have sold it. I am obliged by your criticisms on the Loves of the Plants. I alluded to Moore of Moore Hall, on purpose to give a little air of burlesque, to shelter myself under. For the same purpose the proem was written:—to '*the festoon of ribbon*,' in the preface, I think you helped me.

"*Landau*, *Chaos*, *Vegetable lamb*, were all felt to be objectionable, but not easily mended. I am glad of any criticism, and if I can *easily* mend them, I do.

"I intend to write no more verses, but to try a medico-philosophical work next, called Zoonomia.

"Why don't you publish something wonderful, you who have so much invention? A century of new machines, with plates; or a decade, would be an agreeable work, and well received, I dare say. You might propose some as practicable, others as tried, &c. &c. I should send you any, which have occurred to me—I think such a book would be new in its way, and would procure fame.

"Adieu—I shall hope to see you this summer, and am, with best regards to all yours,

"Your affectionate friend and servant,

E. DARWIN.

"Pray think of a decade of mechanic inventions, with neat drawings, by R. L. Edgeworth, Esq. F. R. S. M. R. I. A. &c. &c. to the end of the alphabet."

With as much sincerity as he gave praise, my father blamed and opposed whatever he thought was faulty in his friend's poem. Dr. Darwin had formed a false theory, that *poetry is painting to the eye;* this led him to confine his attention to the language of description, or to the representation of that, which would produce good effect in picture. To this one mistaken opinion he sacrificed the lasting and extensive fame which he would have obtained had he given free scope to his power of imagination and description.

When my father found, that it was in vain to combat a favourite false principle, he endeavoured to find a subject, which should at once suit his friend's theory, and his genius. He urged Dr. Darwin to write a "Cabinet of Gems." The ancient gems would have afforded a subject eminently suited to his descriptive powers; admitting all his elegance and ingenuity of allusion and simile; employing his classical learning, and bringing into play the passions and imagination; with all of ancient history and tragedy, and all of modern poetry, which would have afforded ample range, and rich materials, for creative fancy. The Labours of Hercules—Venus rising from the sea—Medusa—the Barbarini Vase, &c., and many others which he has introduced into his Botanic Garden, shew how

admirably he would have succeeded, had he pursued the suggestions of his friend, to quit for nobler objects his vegetable loves.

I have heard him predict, that in futures times some critic will arise, who will re-discover the "Botanic Garden," and build his fame upon this discovery &c., —some plunderer will enrich himself by the treasures in the notes.

I regret that my father did not follow Darwin's counsel, about the decade of mechanic inventions. He might in such a publication have inserted a variety of mechanical and agricultural experiments, and a number of contrivances for domestic convenience, of which he had found in his own house the practical advantage. But he neglected to publish any of these, and we were often vexed to see them stolen, or borrowed without acknowledgment. He never would reclaim them, or dispute about priority of invention.

In the year 1792, the health of one of his sons obliged my father to leave Ireland, and to go to Clifton, where he and his family resided nearly two years. This was the first time I had ever been with him away from home. In what is called *the world*, he was a most entertaining guide and companion. His observations upon characters, as they revealed themselves by slight circumstances, were amusing and just. He was a good judge of manners, and of all that related to appearance, both in men and women. Believing, that young people, from sympathy, imitate or catch involuntarily the habits and tone of the company they keep, he thought it of essential consequence, that on their entrance into the

world they should see the best models. "No company or good company," was his maxim. By *good* he did not mean *fine*. Airs and conceit he despised, as much as he disliked vulgarity. Affectation was under awe before him, from an instinctive perception of his powers of ridicule. He could not endure, in favour of any pretensions of birth, fortune, or fashion, the stupidity of a formal circle, or the inanity of common-place conversation. His impatience might, at the moment, be properly concealed; yet the force with which it burst out, when the pressure was taken off, gave the measure of the constraint he had endured. He could not bear the system of visiting, merely to increase the visiting list, or to strengthen the league defensive and offensive of persons, who are to bow and curtsy to each other exclusively, in public places. He used to say, that the misery of half those, who ruin themselves by expense beyond their incomes, arises from their gregarious propensity for crowded assemblies, and their foolish ambition to be *taken notice* of in public places.

Sometimes, perhaps, he carried this principle too far, and at this period of his life was too fastidious in his choice of society; or when he did go into mixed company, if he happened to be suddenly struck with any extravagance or meanness of fashion, he would inveigh against these petty follies with too much vehemence.

He forgot what he had himself once observed in speaking of Mr. Day's wasting the weight and power of philosophy, by employing it against trifles, that "the strength of Hercules could not throw a feather further than it can be thrown by an infant."

It is remarkable, that Mr. Day's declamations against fashionable follies had always been borne with patience by his acquaintance; for they were considered as suitable to a grave, professed philosopher, who never looked, dressed, or comported himself like other people. His auditors secretly consoled themselves for his contempt by the belief, that he knew nothing of the world. On the contrary, with regard to my father, they were provoked to find, that one who evidently did know the world, and who pleased in society, should disdain their company; or should prefer living shut up with his own friends and family. An inconvenience arose from this, which is of more consequence than the mere loss of popularity, that he was often not understood by those who were really worthy of his acquaintance and regard. With that truth and candor, which I know he would have approved, I have here mentioned what appeared to me an error of system and practice during some years of his life, and which afterwards led to serious inconveniences.

He did not like these two years' residence at Clifton. The mode of life at a water-drinking place was not suited to him; he was deprived of the means of employment and interest, which he enjoyed at home, in agriculture and mechanics, and the various business of active life. His mind, however, was not idle. The following letter, from his excellent friend Mr. Wedgwood, may give an idea of the objects, with which he was occupied.

FROM MR. WEDGWOOD.

" DEAR SIR, *Etruria, Oct.* 24, 1792.

" I am truly sorry for the occasion of your visit to Bristol Wells * * * * * * * * * * * * . Matlock waters are likewise much celebrated, and you may know, that our good friend Dr. Darwin thinks, that they possess much the same properties.

" I should think, that the properties of the Clifton waters might be heightened by the execution of your very ingenious thought of filling them with a quantity of fixed air, sufficient to make them rival in that respect the waters of Pyrmont. But I believe, that, if it came to be known, it would ruin, rather than increase the exportation trade of this water, with the bulk of consumers. I should like it much, so medicated, for my own drinking, having received great benefit from aërated water; but I have nevertheless my doubts of the plan being generally approved, not because the water would not he mended by the addition, but merely from the idea, that these things ought to be taken *as God sends them*, without our presuming to attempt an amendment of what we do not understand; but you will be so good as consider me now speaking merely as a water merchant.

" I admire your unwearied and prolific genius, ever laboring for the advantage of mankind, and I answer your observations and queries without delay.

" As you observe, the present coverings to our habitations are liable to many objections, and well he deserves the civic crown from his countrymen, who is happy enough to introduce any important improvement, either in their materials or construction. You wish to be informed, whether tiles may not be made with safety lighter than slates, and of a color to resemble them. Perhaps they could not with safety be made lighter than some of our slates now are; they would become too tender, and every little crack and flaw, to which burnt clay will be liable, would go through the tile, and let the water in. Some slates are light even to a fault, and the roofs are often stripped by a blast of wind. Such are the Welsh blue slates. Tiles could not, as you suggest, be easily made to resemble the color of the beautiful Westmoreland slate, by any means I am at present acquainted with: the use of cobalt and a white clay seem necessary. The cobalt would not give its color to any other but a white clay; this coloring material being sold at two guineas a pound, seems to prohibit its use for

this purpose. Nor do I know any pleasing color, that could be given to tiles; the red of pantiles is too fiery; our dark colored tiles, falsely called blue, are too dismal: in short, I do not know any thing, that would at all bear looking upon, for color, in comparison with the Westmoreland slate.

"With respect to drawing the tiles out under a cylinder, upon boards, as you propose, and, when sufficiently dry, planing them to a proper thinness, this might no doubt be done; but the workmen could form them quite thin enough, and much more expeditiously, in moulds: besides, after they were stiff enough to bear planing, it seems to me, that the turning of their edges would then be much more difficult, if not impossible. Stourbridge clay is certainly an excellent material for making the backs of grates, or any large pieces, which are to be exposed to a considerable degree of heat. I am glad to hear they are applying it to any of these salutary purposes, and I wish you success in your comparison of it with heated iron.

* * * * * *

"Adieu. Believe me, with the sincerest regard,

"Your faithful

"J. Wedgwood."

* * * * * *

In various visits to London during the two years which he spent in England, my father met with persons and circumstances, which recalled previous passages of his life. Of these occurrences, which he always made entertaining to us in the narration, I recollect and will venture to mention one; for though it is trivial, it is characteristic.

In his youth he had been remarked as a good dancer; and, as he says in his memoirs, he had learned the art from the famous Aldridge. In 1793, nearly thirty years having elapsed since that time, happening to be in a coffee-house in London, he observed a gentleman eyeing him with much attention, who at last exclaimed — "It is he! — Certainly, Sir, you are Mr. Edgeworth?"

"I am, Sir."

" Gentlemen," said the stranger, with much importance, addressing himself to several people who were near him—" Here is the best dancer in England, and a man to whom I am under infinite obligations; for I owe to him the foundation of my fortune. Mr. Edgeworth and I were scholars of the famous Aldridge; and once when we practised together, Mr. E. excelled me so much, that I sat down upon the ground, and burst out a crying; he could actually complete an entrechat of twelve distinct beats, which I could not accomplish! However, I was well consoled by him, for he invented, for Aldridge's benefit, '*The tambourine dance*,' which had uncommon success. The dresses were Chinese. Twelve assistants held small drums, furnished with bells, these were struck in the air by the dancer's feet, when held as high as their arms could reach. This Aldridge performed, and *improved* upon by stretching his legs asunder so as to strike two drums at the same time. Those not being the days of elegant dancing, I afterwards," continued the stranger, " exhibited, at Paris, the tambourine dance, to so much advantage, that I made fifteen hundred pounds by it."

The person, who made this singular address and eulogium, was the celebrated dancer, Mr. Slingsby. His testimony at least proves, that my father did not overrate his powers as a dancer; but it was not to boast of a frivolous excellence, that he told this anecdote to his children; it was to express his satisfaction, at having, after the first effervescence of boyish spirits had subsided, cultivated his understanding, turned his inventive powers to useful objects, and chosen as the companions of his maturer years men of the first order of intellect.

His friends and companions in invention now were Watt, Darwin, Keir, Wedgwood; all these he of course visited while he was in England. Besides, he formed new acquaintance with many, who were distinguished for ingenuity and science. At this time I may date the commencement of his friendship with the ingenious, indefatigable, and benevolent Mr. William Strutt, of Derby, with whom he was made acquainted by Dr. Darwin; the common friend of genius and of goodness, which he had the happy talent of discovering, attracting, and attaching.

But while my father was thus refreshing old intimacies, and enjoying new ones, in England, he lost, in Ireland, the man whom, next to Mr. Day, he had always considered as his best friend—the late Lord Longford. The news of Lord Longford's illness had never reached him, till it was accidentally mentioned before him, by a gentleman who was reading a letter from Ireland. Before my father could receive an answer to a letter which he instantly wrote, inquiring into the truth of this report, and offering to return to see his friend, Lord Longford was no more. His services in the British Navy, and his character as an Irish senator, have been fully appreciated by the public. His value in private life, and as a friend, can be justly estimated only by those who have seen and felt how strongly his example and opinions have, for a long course of years, continued to influence his family, and all who had the honor of his friendship. The permanence of this influence after death is a stronger proof of the sincerity of the esteem and admiration felt for the character of the individual, than any which can be given during his lifetime. I can bear witness, that in one instance it never ceased

to operate. I know, that on every important occasion of my father's life, where he was called upon to judge or act, long after Lord Longford was no more, his example and opinions seemed constantly present to him; he delighted in the recollection of instances of his friend's sound judgment, honor, and generosity; these he applied in his own conduct, and held up to the emulation of his children.

While we resided at Clifton, my father became acquainted with the celebrated Dr. Beddoes; and it is remarkable, that this acquaintance was in consequence of the Doctor's great admiration for the character of Mr. Day. This had induced Dr. Beddoes to seek the acquaintance of Mrs. Day, and of her friend, Mr. Keir. When Dr. Beddoes came to Clifton, with the view of settling as a physician, Mr. Keir gave him a letter of introduction to my father, who was, I believe, his first acquaintance there. My father admired his abilities, was eager to cultivate his society; and this intimacy continuing some months, he had opportunities of assisting in establishing the Doctor at Clifton.

In the autumn of 1793, we heard, that disturbances were beginning to break out in Ireland, and my father thought it his duty to return there immediately. Our preparations for leaving Clifton seemed particularly to grieve and alarm Dr. Beddoes. During the summer's acquaintance with our family, he had become strongly attached to one of my sisters—Anna. He had permission to follow her in the spring; and they were married at Edgeworth-Town, on the 17th of April, 1794.

CHAPTER V.

The disturbances in Ireland, of which we had seen exaggerated accounts in the English newspapers, did not, at our first return home, appear formidable. Though we were occasionally alarmed by reports of outrages committed by *heart-of-oak boys* and *defenders* in distant counties, and though in our own there were some nightly marauders, yet, upon the whole, our neighbourhood continued tolerably quiet. Towards the end of the year 1794, a rumour of a French invasion spread through the country, raising the hopes of the disaffected, and creating terror in all who had any thing to lose. The variety of contradictory reports, the difficulty which the higher classes found in ascertaining the truth, increased the embarrassment and the danger. Means of quickly receiving and communicating information were essential. At this time, my father proposed to the Irish government a telegraph of his invention, and persevered in his efforts, to have it established at his own expense, or in any way government might approve.

The following letters give some view, both of the state of the country, and of my father's public and private pursuits, at this period.

TO DR. DARWIN.

" MY DEAR DOCTOR, *Edgeworth-Town, Sept.* 7, 1794.

" Being, like Sancho, a retailer of proverbs, I remark, ' that it never rains, but it pours.' Your obliging letter came the day after Zoonomia, which was retarded by winds and waves. Had it come sooner to my hands, you may be sure, that you would have received my acknowledgements for your present. Some of my great, great grand-children will, with laudable vanity, shew the *ex dono* to their envying contemporaries, and exult in the friendship of their ancestor.

" Just recovering from the alarm occasioned by a sudden irruption of defenders into this neighbourhood, *and* from the business of a county meeting, *and* the glory of commanding a squadron of horse, *and* from the exertion requisite to treat with proper indifference an anonymous letter sent by persons who have sworn to assassinate me, I received the peaceful philosophy of Zoonomia ; and though it has been in my hands not many minutes, I found much to delight and instruct me.
* * * *

" We were lately in a sad state here, the sans culottes (literally such) took a very effectual way of obtaining power ; they robbed of arms all the houses in the country ; thus arming themselves, and disarming their opponents. By *waking* the bodies of their friends, the human corpse not only becomes familiar to the sans culottes of Ireland, but is associated with pleasure in their minds, by the festivity of these nocturnal orgies. An insurrection of such people, who have been much oppressed, must be infinitely more horrid than any thing that has happened in France ; for no hired executioners need be sought from the prisons, or the galleys. And yet the people here are altogether better than in England. The higher classes are far worse* ; the middling classes far inferior to yours, very far indeed ; but the peasants, though cruel, are generally docile, and of the strongest powers, both of body and mind.

" A good government may make this a great country, because the raw material is good and simple. In England to make a

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* The reader will observe, that this was written thirty years ago ; what is here said refers, *I know*, to the political, not to the moral character of the higher classes in Ireland. M. E.

carte-blanche fit to receive a proper impression, you must grind down all the old rags to purify them.

"Adieu, my excellent friend: your generous conduct to Dr. Beddoes does not escape me. Give my best services to Mrs. Darwin, whom I admire as much as a man ought to admire the wife of his friend.

"Yours,

"R. L. EDGEWORTH.

"P.S. What you say of *Ennui* in Zoonomia is an admirable observation. The fondness for *life itself* is certainly produced by the pleasurable sensations of different movements in our bodies, that have no names: the sum of which counterbalance a great share of pain. Atticus, by starving himself, had destroyed these pleasures so far as to make him unwilling to be at the trouble of living, even after his disease had left him."

TO THE SAME.

"MY DEAR DOCTOR, *Edgeworth-Town Dec.* 11, 1794.

"The Swiss 'mal du pays' is a periodical disease, which comes on after certain intervals. I believe that every body, who has any heart, after a certain time longs to see, and, if they cannot visit to write to their friends *beyond sea.*

"I have been employed for two months in experiments upon a telegraph of my own invention. I tried it partially twenty-six years ago. It differs from the French in distinctness and expedition, as the intelligence is not conveyed alphabetically.

"I propose to government, to raise a corps of Vedettes, and to station them in fifty or sixty posts, from which a constant correspondence may be kept up with the capital. I also propose to carry my visual communication across the channel to London.

"In your country I hope, that ministers have satisfied themselves, that there was no design to introduce *sans culottism;* and that the discontent, which reasonable men expressed against the flagrant abuses, and insane wars, was a feeling very different from a wish to call old Chaos from the bed of night.

"Here things are very different. The lowest order of the people has been long oppressed; and horrid calamities may ensue from their ignorance.

"I intended to detail my telegraphs (in the plural), but I find that I have not room at present. If you think it worth while, you

shall have the whole scheme before you, which I know you will improve for me. Suffice it, that, by day, at eighteen, or twenty miles distance, I shew, by four pointers, isosceles triangles, twenty feet high, on four imaginary circles, eight imaginary points, which correspond with the figures

0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7.

So that seven thousand different combinations are formed, of four figures each, which refer to a dictionary of words; by an additional contrivance, seven different vocabularies are referred to—of lists of the Navy, Army, Militia, Lords, Commons, geographical and technical terms, &c., besides an alphabet. So that every thing one wishes may be transmitted with expedition.

"By night, white lights are used—Query, the most economical? I wrote to another friend, but he is as laconic and obscure as Delphos. Adieu, my dear Doctor. Anna is happy with Dr. Beddoes, and the rest of my family flourish: so I hope do all yours, and at their head their excellent and amiable mother.

"Yours,

"R. L. Edgeworth.

"I hope Erasmus is growing rich and powerful; as he is not married, what but riches and power can interest him?"

FROM DR. DARWIN.

"DEAR SIR, *Derby, March* 15, 1795.

"I beg your pardon, for not immediately answering your last favor, which was owing to the great influence the evil demon has at present in all affairs on this earth. That is, I lost your letter, and have in vain looked over some scores of papers, and cannot find it. Secondly, having lost your letter, I daily hoped to find it again—without success.

"The telegraph you described, I dare say, would answer the purpose. It would be like a giant wielding his long arms, and talking with his fingers: and those long arms might be covered with lamps in the night. You should place four or six such gigantic figures in a line, so that they should spell a whole word at once; and other such figures within sight of each other, all round the coast of Ireland; and thus fortify yourselves, instead of Friar Bacon's wall of brass round England—with the brazen head, which spoke—'Time is! Time was! Time is past!'

" The death of Mr. Wedgwood grieves me very much; he is a public, as well as a private loss. We all grow old but you! When I think of dying, it is always without pain or fear.

" I kept this letter three or four days, to send you a legal receipt, and now I don't know how to send you one. Mr. Burns, the Quaker, once let me a lease, which began with—'Friend Darwin, honest men need no lawyer, I hereby let you a lease,' &c. So I send you my receipt, as follows * * * * * without technical form.

" Adieu; your sincere and affectionate friend,

" E. DARWIN."

In August, 1794, my father first made a trial of his telegraph, between Pakenham Hall and Edgeworth-Town, a distance of twelve miles; he found it succeed beyond his expectations: and in November following, he made another trial of it at Collon, at Mr. Foster's in the county of Louth. The telegraphs were on two hills, at fifteen miles distance from each other. A communication of intelligence was made, and an answer received, in the space of five minutes. Mr. Foster, my father's friend, and the friend of every thing useful to Ireland, was well convinced of the advantage and security this country would derive from a system of quick and certain communication; and, being satisfied of the sufficiency of this telegraph, advised, that a memorial on the subject should be drawn up for government. Accordingly, under his auspices, a memorial was presented, in 1795, to Lord Camden, then Lord Lieutenant. His Excellency glanced his eye over the paper, and said, that he did not think such an establishment necessary, but desired to reserve the matter for further consideration. My father waited in Dublin for some time. The suspense and doubt, in which courtiers are obliged to live, is very different from that state of

philosophical doubt, which the wise recommend, and to which they are willing to submit. My father's patience was soon exhausted. The county in which he resided was then in a disturbed state, and he was eager to return to his family, who required his protection. Besides, to state things exactly as they were, his was not the sort of temper suited to attendance upon the great, as may appear from the following note.

TO MRS. EDGEWORTH.

"MY DEAREST LOVE, *Dublin, 7th Jan.* 1795.

"My business is taken *ad referendum*, in the Dutch manner. It was expected, I suppose, that I should pay my court: no court on earth shall detain me another day from those I love, and whom I shall protect as far as my powers of mind and body will permit. The news I hear from the county of Longford makes even my philosophy impatient to return to you. My best love to dear Charlotte Sneyd. My second best in order due. Send the chaise to meet me on Friday.

"R. L. E."

The disturbances in the county of Longford were quieted for a time by the military; but again, in the autumn of the ensuing year, (Sept. 1796), rumours of an invasion prevailed, and spread with redoubled force through Ireland, disturbing commerce, and alarming all ranks of well disposed subjects. My father wrote to Lord Carhampton, then commander in chief, and to Mr. Pelham, (now Lord Chichester), who was then secretary in Ireland, offering his services. The secretary requested Mr. Edgeworth would furnish him with a memorial. Aware of the natural antipathy, that public men feel to the sight of long memorials, this was made short enough, to give it a chance of being read.

Presented, Oct. 6th, 1796.

" Mr. Edgeworth will undertake to convey intelligence from Dublin to Cork, and back to Dublin, by means of fourteen or fifteen different stations, at the rate of one hundred pounds per annum for each station, as long as government shall think proper: and from Dublin to any other place, at the same rate, in proportion to the distance; provided, that, when government chuses to discontinue the business, they shall pay one year's contract over and above the current expense, as some compensation for the prime cost of the apparatus, and the trouble of the first establishment."

In a letter of a single page accompanying this memorial, it was stated, that to establish a telegraphic corps of men sufficient to convey intelligence to every part of the kingdom where it should be necessary, stations tenable against a mob, and against musketry, might be effected, for the sum of *six or seven thousand pounds:* it was further observed, that of course, there must be a considerable difference between a partial and a general plan of telegraphic communication; that Mr. Edgeworth was perfectly willing to pursue either, or to adopt, without reserve, any better plan, that government should approve.—Thanks were returned, and approbation expressed.

Nothing now appeared in suspense except the *mode* of the establishment, whether it should be civil or military. Meantime Mr. Pelham spoke of the Duke of York's wish, to have a reconnoitring telegraph, and observed, that Mr. Edgeworth's would be exactly what his Royal Highness wanted. Mr. Edgeworth in a few days constructed a portable telegraph, and offered it to Mr. Pelham. He accepted it, and at his request my brother Lovell carried it to England, and presented it to the Duke from Mr. Pelham.

During the interval of my brother's absence in England, my father had no doubt, that arrangements

were making for a telegraphic establishment in Ireland. But the next time he went to the Castle, he saw signs of a change in the Secretary's countenance, who seemed much hurried—promised he would write—wrote, and conveyed, in diplomatic form, a final refusal. Mr. Pelham, indeed endeavoured to make it as civil as he could, concluding his letter with these words:

"The utility of a Telegraph may hereafter be considered greater, but I trust, that at all events, those talents, which have been directed to this pursuit, will be turned to some other object; and that the public will have the benefit of that extraordinary activity and zeal, which I have witnessed on this occasion, in some other institution, which, I am sure, that the ingenuity of the author will not require much time to suggest.

"I have the honor to be,

"*Dublin Castle*, "With great respect, &c.
17*th Nov.* 1796." "T. PELHAM."

Of his offer to establish a communication from the coast of Cork to Dublin, at *his own expense*, no notice was taken. "He had, as was known to government, expended 500*l.* of his own money; as much more would have erected a temporary establishment for a year to Cork. Thus the utility of this invention might have been tried, and the most prudential government upon earth could not have accused itself of extravagance in being partner with a private gentleman, in an experiment, which had, with inferior apparatus, and at four times the expense, been tried in France and England, and approved." The most favorable supposition, by which we can account for the conduct of the Irish government in this business, is, that a superior influence in England forbade them to proceed. "It must," said my father, "be mortifying to a viceroy, who comes over to

Ireland with enlarged views, and benevolent intentions, to discover, when he attempts to act for himself, that he is peremptorily checked; that a circle is chalked round him, beyond which he cannot move."

No personal feelings of pique or disgust prevented my father from renewing his efforts to be of service to his country. Two months after the rejection of his telegraph, on Friday the 30th of December, 1796, the French were on the Irish coasts. Of this he received intelligence late at night: immediately he sent a servant express to the Secretary, with a letter, offering to erect telegraphs, which he had in Dublin, on any line that government should direct, and proposing to bring his own men with him; or to join the army with his portable telegraphs, to reconnoitre. His servant was sent back with a note from the Secretary, containing compliments, and the promise of a speedy answer: no further answer ever reached him. Upon this emergency he could, with the assistance of his friends, have established an immediate communication between Dublin and the coast, which would not have cost the country one shilling. My father shewed no mortification at the neglect with which he was treated, but acknowledged, that he felt much "concern in losing an opportunity of saving an enormous expense to the public, and of alleviating the anxiety and distress of thousands." A telegraph was most earnestly wished for at this time by the best informed people in Ireland, as well as by those, whose perceptions had suddenly quickened at the view of immediate danger. Great distress, bankruptcies, and ruin to many families, were the consequences of this attempted invasion. The troops were harassed with contradictory orders and forced marches, for want of

intelligence, and from that indecision which must always be the consequence of insufficient information. Many days were spent in terror, and in fruitless wishes for an English fleet. One fact may mark the hurry and confusion of the time; the cannon and the ball sent to Bantry Bay were of different calibre. At last Ireland was providentially saved by the change of the wind, which prevented the enemy from effecting a landing on her coast.

These facts are stated from my father's "*Letter to Lord Charlemont on the Telegraph*," a political pamphlet, uncommon at least for its temperate and good humored tone.

In the sixth volume of the transactions of the Royal Irish Academy, he published an "Essay on the art of conveying swift and secret intelligence." Accounts of his apparatus, and specimens of his vocabulary, have been copied into various popular publications, therefore it is sufficient here to refer to them. The peculiar advantages of his machinery consist, in the first place, in being as free from friction as possible; consequently in its being easily moved, and not easily destroyed by use. In the next place, on its being simple, consequently easy to make and to repair. The superior advantage of his vocabulary arises from its being undecipherable. This depends on his employing the numerical figures instead of the alphabet. With a power of almost infinite change, and consequently with defiance of detection, he applies the combination of numerical figures to the words of any common dictionary, or to any length of phrase in any given vocabulary. He was the first, who made this application of figures to telegraphic communication.

Much has been urged by various modern claimants

for the honor of the invention of the telegraph. In England, the claims of Dr. Hooke, and of the Marquis of Worcester, to the original idea, are incontestable. The invention long lay dormant, till wakened into active service by the French. But long before the French telegraph appeared, my father had tried his first telegraphic experiments. As he mentions in his own narrative, he tried the use of windmill sails in 1767 in Berkshire, and also a nocturnal telegraph with lamps and illuminated letters, between London and Hampstead; and more than twenty years afterwards, on the 24th of August, 1794, my brothers had the satisfaction of sending, by my father's telegraph, four messages across the channel, and of receiving immediate answers, before a vast concourse of spectators.

His Essay on the Telegraph concludes with the following words: — "Imitations without end may be attempted; pointers of various shapes and materials may be employed; real improvements will also probably be made, and perhaps new principles may be adopted. The varieties of art are infinite, and none but persons of narrow understanding, who feel a want of resources in their own invention, are jealous of competition, or are disposed to monopolize discoveries. The thing itself must sooner or later prevail; for utility convinces and governs mankind; and however inattention or timidity may for a time impede its progress, I will venture to predict, that it will at some future period be generally practised, not only in these islands, but that it will, in time, become a means of communication between the most distant parts of the world, wherever arts and sciences have civilized mankind."

With the same philosophic calmness my father wrote to his private friends.

TO MRS. E.

"*Dublin, Tuesday night,*
"MY DEAR WIFE, *Nov.* 14, 1796.

"After waiting long, as is usual, and indeed, from the multiplicity of suitors, as is necessary, I saw the secretary this afternoon.

"The Admiralty in England do not chuse to extend their telegraphic fame; and the government here does not chuse to extend mine. The secretary is to write to me, but I know it is to convey a negative.

"My mind keeps its own place, and my happiness depends on you and yours, and not on them and theirs.

"I hope, if I do not escape from Dublin so as to reach you before this letter can, to see you and my dear home on Saturday.

"Yours, I think I may say *ever*,
"RICHARD LOVELL EDGEWORTH."

TO DR. DARWIN.

"*Edgeworth-Town,*
"MY DEAR DOCTOR, *Dec.* 18, 1796.

"I took up a sheet of paper above a month ago, upon which I wrote half a page to you, intending to fill it with a pompous account of my having established a most complete system of intelligence all through the kingdom, that ever was attempted by ingenuity, and accomplished by industry. But before the moon had completed her lunatic gyration, I found that I had been counting on the faith of Lord Lieutenants, and their satellites. After having had a great deal of trouble and expense, and some entertainment and improvement, I was turned off to graze. Whether my independence, or disinterestedness, or some other crime, was the cause, I cannot tell; but I have dared to publish the whole transaction *pro bono publico*, believing, that if men would abstain from abuse or calumny, and publish facts under their own names, it would be of use to those who govern, and to those who are to be governed. I have besides, in my own appeal, touched upon some general subjects of Irish politics. Mr. Johnson

will send you a copy as soon as it is printed, but I do not insist upon your reading it.

"In one of your letters some time ago, you advised us to read Dugald Stewart, and to write upon education. Stewart we have read with great profit and pleasure, and we are writing upon education. Maria recurs frequently to your authority in a chapter on "attention," and has, I think—pardon my paternal partiality, managed your gigantic weapons with as much adroitness, as could be expected from a dwarf. Your new terms in Zoonomia require to be mouthed frequently to make them familiar; and in conversation we sometimes forget our grammar. She would write to ask you some questions, if she dared.

"I find my paper growing scant, and I had a great many things to say to you.

"I am to thank you for saving the eyes of a valuable horse; he was young. I had bred him. 'Till I read Zoonomia, I could not account for the frequent inflammation of his eyes. He and two other horses were going blind. From the construction of the stable, and the trimming of the inside of their ears, I suspected that what you had said was applicable to them. Since I put caps on the horses' ears, they have got well.

"In the 'Sea-sick Minstrel,' page 50, there is a curious physico-medical anecdote. 'A young man, under the gripe of the tiger, appeared to move his lips, but uttered no sound. When he got free he reproached the bystanders with not having answered his screams.'

"See 'Journal Etranger' for 1756, page 55, for an anecdote about physicians.

"Adieu, my dear Doctor,

"R. L. E."

If we could see the really private letters written by persons who had been warmly engaged in any public affair, and who were disappointed, how often would there appear a shameful contradiction between the ostensible motives and characters of the writers; also between their professed composure and their real irritability and irritation.

I am proud to shew, that my father spoke the same sentiments, and felt the same in private as in public.

In the succeeding year my father's pursuits were all interrupted by domestic calamity. Mrs. E's. health, which had long been precarious, rapidly declined. She died in the year 1797.

I have heard my father say, that during the seventeen years of his marriage with this lady, he never once saw her out of temper, and never received from her an unkind word, or an angry look. Her solicitude and attention in the education of a large family of children were unremitting, greater than her health could bear, and such as even maternal affection would have found difficult, perhaps impossible to sustain, unless they had been supported by attachment to a husband of superior mind.

CHAPTER VI.

During the fifteen preceding years of which I have been giving an account, the variety of my father's employments never prevented him from attending to his great object — the education of his children. On the contrary, some of his occupations assisted in affording him daily and hourly opportunities for giving instruction after his manner, without formal lectures or lessons. For instance, at the time when he was building or carrying on experiments, or work of any sort, he constantly explained to his children whatever was doing or to be done ; and by questions adapted to their several ages and capacities, exercised their powers of observation, reasoning, and invention.

It often happened, that trivial circumstances, by which the curiosity of the children had been excited, or experiments obvious to the senses, by which they had been interested, led afterwards to deeper reflection or to philosophical enquiries, suited to others in the family of more advanced age and knowledge. The animation spread through the house by connecting children with all that is going on, and allowing them to join in thought or conversation with the grown-up people of the family, was highly useful,

and thus both sympathy and emulation excited mental exertion in the most agreeable manner.

In trying experiments he always showed, that he was intent upon learning the truth, not upon supporting his opinion. By the examples he thus set us of fairness, candor, and patience, he trained the understanding to follow the best rules of philosophising; and, what is of more consequence for the happiness of the individual, he thus taught his pupils to apply philosophy to the government of the temper.

He explained and described clearly. — He knew so exactly the habits, powers, and knowledge of his pupils, that he seldom failed in estimating what each could comprehend or accomplish. He saw at once where their difficulty lay, and knew how far to assist, how far to urge the mind, and where to leave it entirely to its own exertions. His patience in teaching was peculiarly meritorious, I may say surprising, in a man of his vivacity. He would sit quietly while a child was thinking of the answer to a question, without suffering it to be interrupted; and, without a leading observation or exclamation, would let the pupil touch and quit the point repeatedly, would wait till the steps of reasoning and invention were gone through, and till the guess was converted into certainty. This was sometimes trying to the patience of the bye-standers, who often thought that the question was too difficult; when just at the moment that the silence and suspense could be no longer endured, his judgment has been justified, and his forbearance rewarded, by the child's giving a perfectly satisfactory answer.

The reward of his praise was delightful, it was so warmly, so fondly given. The cool bye-stander might

have thought, that it would inspire vanity ; but against this danger there was a preservative, there was mixed with the praise, so much affectionate sympathy, so much parental triumph in his children's success, that affection for him was excited more than vanity for themselves,—and they insensibly drew the conclusion, that affection is better worth than admiration.

In the education of the heart, his warmth of approbation, or his strength of indignation, had powerful influence. The scorn in his countenance, when he heard of any base conduct ; the pleasure that lighted up his eyes, when he heard of any generous action ; the eloquence of his language, and vehemence of his emphasis, commanded the sympathy of all who could see, hear, feel, or understand.

It sometimes happens, that a preceptor appears to have great influence for a time, and then his power suddenly dissolves. This is the case, wherever any sort of deception has been used. My father, in the whole course of the education of his children, never used any artifice of any kind, and consequently he always possessed that confidence, which is the reward of plain dealing ; a confidence which increases in the pupil's mind with age, knowledge, and experience. I dwell on this reflection, certainly, with pride and pleasure, but independently of private feelings, I trust that my assertion of the fact, may be useful to the public, by adding fresh testimony, and stronger conviction to the belief parents should have, that their influence will be firm over the hearts of their children, if they treat them with openness and plain truth.

CHAPTER VII.

My father was past fifty when he was left a third time a widower, with a numerous family, four sons and five daughters living with him, some of them grown up, and some very young. Besides his children, two sisters of the late Mrs. Edgeworth resided with us. They had friends and connexions in England, for whom they had high esteem and affection; yet they remained in Ireland after their sister's death, continuing to form part of a family, attached to them not only by the ties of kindred, but by the strongest feelings of love and gratitude. They, and all who knew my father intimately, and had seen how much the felicity of his former life depended upon conjugal affection, were aware that he could never be happy, unless he married again.

Among the acquaintance and friends whose society he cultivated at intervals, when he emerged from his domestic circle, was Dr. Beaufort, whose name is well known to the British public, as author of one of the best maps of Ireland, with a valuable memoir of its topography. He was still better known in his own country, as an excellent clergyman, pious and liberal, with most conciliating manners.

My father first met him at Mr. Foster's (afterwards Lord Oriel) at Collon, of which place Dr. Beaufort was vicar, and afterwards saw him frequently at Black Castle, the residence of my father's favorite sister, Mrs. Ruxton.

Dr. Beaufort's literary tastes, and delightful conversation, were peculiarly attractive to my father, who soon became intimate with him, and with his amiable family. The eldest daughter possessed uncommon talents for drawing; and at the request of my aunt (Mrs. Ruxton), Miss Beaufort sketched designs for some of my stories; these were shewn to my father, and he criticised them as freely as if they had not been the work of a lady, and made for his daughter. He was charmed by the temper and good sense with which his criticisms were received; and in a visit which she and her family paid at Edgeworth Town, had an opportunity of seeing that she possessed exactly the temper, abilities, and disposition which would insure the happiness of his family as well as his own, if he could hope to win her affections.

When I first knew of this attachment, and before I was well acquainted with Miss Beaufort, I own that I did not wish for the marriage. I had not my father's quick penetration into character. I did not at first discover the superior abilities and qualities which he saw; consequently, I did not anticipate any of the happy consequences from this union which he foresaw. All that I thought, I told him. With the most kind patience he bore with me, and instead of withdrawing his affection, honored me the more with his confidence. He took me with him to Collon,

threw open his whole mind to me—let me see all the changes and workings of his heart. I remember his once saying to me, "I believe, that no human creature ever saw the heart of another more completely without disguise, than you have seen mine." I can never, without the strongest emotions of affection and gratitude, recollect the infinite kindness he shewed me at this time, the solicitude he felt for my happiness at the moment when all his own was at stake, and while all his feelings were in the agony of suspense; the consequence was, that no daughter ever felt more sympathy with a father, than I felt for him; and assuredly the pains he took to make me fully acquainted with the character of the woman he loved, and to make mine known to her, were not thrown away. Both her inclination and judgment decided in his favour. His eloquent affection conquering her timidity, and inspiring her with the necessary and just confidence in her own abilities, she consented to undertake the great responsibility of becoming the mistress of that large family, of whose happiness she was now to take charge.

He announces his intended marriage to Dr. Darwin in the following letter.

"MY DEAR DOCTOR, 1798.

"I HAVE received from England a very fine head of you:—when I say a *fine* head, I mean only as to the execution; for it does not give an idea of any faculty of your mind, except ingenuity;—there is a cloud over your brow, and a compression of the lips, that hide your benevolence and good humour. And great author as you are, my dear Doctor, I think you excel the generality of mankind as much in generosity, as in abilities. I observe with pleasure, mixed with pride, the rapid growth of your fame. We wait with impatience for your new book. We have wished to collect some facts for you; but before I finish my letter you will see,

that *I* had other game in view. I must give you my notes in disorder.

"The Upas, for which you have been so much abused, *may* not grow in Java:—but a traveller of undoubted veracity, *Stedman*, (Voyage to Surinam, vol. ii. p. 183,) mentions qualities of the marcoory tree almost as formidable, and not dissimilar.

"Frogs, and other small animals frozen, have their limbs as brittle as a tobacco pipe. The broken frozen limbs heal, when gradually thawed, but if refrozen, they never coalesce. (Vid. Hearne's Hudson's Bay Discoveries, p. 397.) I suppose that the second freezing breaks off the corresponding indentures of the fracture.

"Are you still bent upon agriculture? If you are, here is a note and query for you. In 1787 I rented a farm of thirty acres, at a rack rent of half a guinea per acre. I improved it, was never any one time one hundred pounds out of pocket; and in five years had seventeen pounds clear profit to balance of accounts. I let it on a long lease, at one guinea and a half per acre, to a rich tenant.—Query: how was it improved? A most exact account was kept of profit and loss.

"I propose to heat hot-houses by pipes laid through dung-hills, and communicating with the open air at one end, and opening into the house at the other. Such pipes, in common stable-dung, continue to give out air at a regular heat of 95° Fahrenheit for many days, as Lovel and I have tried in a pipe six inches diameter. I saw one of your old inventions claimed by somebody in the papers, the other day,—two balls chained together, and shot at once from separate cannon.

"The speaking machine, which is just announced from France, does not say so many words as yours did many years ago. It prattles only papa and mamma. Yours spoke those words, and could also say GO. I placed one of your mouths in a room near some people in 1770, who actually thought I had a child with me, calling papa and mamma.

"And now for my piece of news, which I have kept for the last. I am going to be married to a young lady of small fortune and large accomplishments,—compared with my age, much youth, (not quite 30), and more prudence — some beauty, more sense — uncommon talents, more uncommon temper, — liked by my family, loved by me. If I can say all this three years hence, shall not I have been a fortunate, not to say a wise man?

"R. L. E."

While my father's domestic happiness seemed preparing so smoothly, public affairs in Ireland wore a stormy aspect. This was in the year 1798. A few days after the preceding letter was written, we heard, that a conspiracy had been discovered in Dublin, that the city was under arms, and its inhabitants in the greatest terror. Dr. Beaufort and his family were there. My father, who was at Edgeworth-Town, set out immediately to join them.

On his way he met an intimate friend; they travelled together one stage, and a singular conversation passed. This friend, who as yet knew nothing of my father's intentions, began to speak of the marriage of some other person, and exclaimed against the folly and imprudence of any man's marrying in such disturbed times, "no man of honor, sense, or feeling, would incumber himself with a wife at such a time!" — My father urged, that this was just the time when a man of honor, sense, and feeling, would wish, if he loved a woman, to unite his fate with hers, and to acquire the right of being her protector.

The conversation dropped there. Presently they talked of public affairs — of what would probably be said and done in the next session of Parliament — of the measure expected to be proposed of a union between England and Ireland. My father, foreseeing that this important national question would probably come on, had just obtained a seat in Parliament.* His friend, not knowing or recollecting this, began to speak of the imprudence of commencing a political career late in life.

* He was elected for the borough of St. John's Town, County of Longford.

"No man, you know," said he, "but a fool would venture to make a first speech in Parliament, or to marry, after he was fifty."

My father laughed, and surrendering all title to wisdom, declared, that, though he was past fifty, he was actually going in a few days, as he hoped, to be married, and in a few months would probably make his "first speech in Parliament."

As fast as possible my father pursued his way to Dublin. He found the city as it had been described to him, under arms, in dreadful expectation. The timely apprehension of the heads of the conspiracy at this crisis prevented a revolution, and saved the capital. But the danger for the country was not over—insurrections, which were to have been general and simultaneous, broke out in different parts of the kingdom. The confessions of a conspirator, who had turned informer, and the papers seized and published, proved, that there existed in the country a deep and widely spread spirit of rebellion. Though disconcerted by the present vigilance or good fortune of government, it was hardly to be doubted, that fresh attempts, in concert with foreign enemies, would be made in future. From different reasons, all parties thought the country in a perilous situation.

Still instead of delaying his marriage, which some advised, my father urged for an immediate day. On the 31st of May he was married to Miss Beaufort, by her brother, the Rev. William Beaufort, at St. Anne's church, in Dublin. They came down to Edgeworth-Town immediately, through a part of the country that was in actual insurrection. Late in the evening they arrived safely at home, and my father presented his bride to his expecting, anxious family, including the

sisters of the late Mrs. Edgeworth,—those excellent aunts (Mrs. Mary and Charlotte Sneyd). Instead of returning to their many and warmly attached friends and relations in England, they preferred remaining at Edgeworth-Town. This was an auspicious omen to the common people in our neighbourhood, by whom they were universally beloved;—it spoke well, they said, for the *new* lady.

CHAPTER VIII.

The summer of 1798 passed without any interruption of our domestic tranquillity. Though disturbances in different parts of Ireland had broken out, yet now, as in former trials, the County of Longford remained quiet; free at least from open insurrection, and, as far as appeared, the people well disposed. They complained, however, very frequently to my father of the harassing of certain new-made justices of the peace, and yeomen military, or, as the people called them, *scourers of the country*, who, galloping about night and day, would let no poor man sleep in peace. Our magistracy had at that time fallen below its proper level; many of the great proprietors of this county were absentees; and for want of resident gentlemen, magistrates were made of men without education, experience, or hereditary respectability. During the war, and in consequence of what were called the *war-prices*, graziers, land-jobbers, and middle-men had risen into comparative wealth; and instead of turning in due season, according to the natural order of things, into Buckeens and Squireens, they had been metamorphosed into justices of the peace and committee men, or into yeomen lieutenants and captains. In these their new characters, they bustled and bravadoed; and sometimes from mere ignorance, and sometimes in

the certainty of party support or public indemnity, they overleaped the bounds of law. Upon slight suspicion, or vague information, they took up and imprisoned many who were innocent; the relations of the injured appealed to him, who was known to be the friend of public justice. I will not say *the friend of the poor*, though this was the name by which I have often heard my father called. But this has become a hackneyed expression, degraded from its real meaning, since it has been used for party purposes, or by those who aim only at vulgar popularity. In consequence of appeals to him, my father made inquiry at public sessions or assizes into various cases of persons, who had been imprisoned. Sometimes such examinations, warrants, and committals, were produced, or such explanatory letters were written to him by justices of the quorum, worded in such a blundering manner, so spelled, so scrawled, as to be almost illegible and quite incomprehensible. All this would have been ludicrous, had not the matter been too serious for ridicule, where the liberties and lives of human creatures were at stake. My father exerted himself upon all occasions to keep the law in its due course, representing, that whether the accused were innocent or guilty, they were entitled to fair trial; that, till it was proved that they had forfeited the protection of our constitution, no persons should be treated as enemies or outlaws; that it was bad policy to make the people detest the authority, which they were bound to obey, and on their obedience to which the safety of all ranks depends.

Those who were conscious of making themselves objects of dislike to the lower class of people were naturally afraid, that, if any disturbance arose, they should be

the first victims; and cowardice combined with party prejudice, to increase their violence. They disregarded my father's representations; as far as they dared, resented his interference; and were in unfeigned astonishment at his opposite course of conduct. They found, that when he was to judge of any action, he never inquired whether it had been committed by a catholic, or a protestant; nor would he use, or permit to be used before him, either as a magistrate or as landlord, any of those party names, which designate and perpetuate party hatred. He would not even understand, that the term *an honest man*, pronounced with peculiar emphasis, meant, with one party, exclusively a *protestant*. The principle of "Shew me the man, and I will shew you the law," he considered as the opprobrium of magistracy. He believed that justice, like honesty, of which in fact it is only a more enlarged description, is always the best policy. He adhered therefore to the straight rule of right, without entering into any of the obliquities of expediency. The maxim, that extraordinary times call for extraordinary measures, he considered to be a principle, dangerous as it is vague; since those who fancy they obey a mysterious legislative *call*, are often hurried on merely by the suggestions of their own fears or their own passions. No partial commotion should be suffered to disturb even-handed justice: nothing less than a general earthquake of the state should wrench the balance from the hand of the law. When the scales are overturned, nothing remains but the sword.

Towards the autumn of the year 1798, this country became in such a state, that the necessity for resorting to the sword seemed imminent. Even in the

county of Longford, which had so long remained quiet, alarming symptoms appeared, not immediately in our neighbourhood, but within six or seven miles of us, near Granard. In the adjacent counties military law had been proclaimed, and our village was within a mile of the bounds of the disturbed county of Westmeath. Though his own tenantry, and all in whom he put trust, were as quiet, and, as far as he could judge, well disposed, yet my father was aware, from information of too good authority to be doubted, that numbers of disaffected persons throughout Ireland were leagued in secret rebellion, and waited only for the arrival of the French to break out.

Many held themselves in abeyance, not so much from disloyalty, as from fear; they dreaded that they should be ultimately the conquered party. Those who were really and actually engaged, and in communication with the rebels, and with the foreign enemy, were so secret and cunning, that no proofs could be obtained against them; while the eagerness to gain information laid proprietors in the middle and higher classes open to treachery, and to double danger from informers, who often gave them false clews, to involve them still farther in darkness and error. The object of such persons being in general to gratify private malice, or to favour the escape of the guilty by turning suspicion upon the innocent.

Previous to this time, the principal gentry in the county had raised corps of yeomanry; but my father, who had held for some months the commission of Captain of Yeomen Cavalry, had delayed doing so, because as long as the civil authority had

been sufficient, he was unwilling to resort to military interference, or to the ultimate law of force, of the abuse of which he had seen too many recent examples. However, it now became necessary, even for the sake of justice to his own tenantry, that they should be put upon a footing with others, have equal security of protection, and an opportunity of evincing their loyal dispositions. He therefore determined to raise a corps of infantry, which would accommodate a poorer class of the people, and to admit Catholics as well as Protestants. This was so unusual, and thought to be so hazardous a degree of liberality, that by some of an opposite party it was attributed to the worst motives. Many who wished him well came privately to let him know of the odium to which he exposed himself—the timid hinted fears and suspicions that he was going to put arms into the hands of men, who would desert or betray him, in the hour of trial; who might find themselves easily absolved from holding any faith with a Protestant, and with one of a family, of whom the head, in former times, had been distinguished by the appellation of *Protestant Frank*. He thanked his secret advisers, but openly and steadily abided by his purpose. Suspicion he knew often produces the very evils it fears; and confidence he felt to be due to those, who had hitherto conducted themselves irreproachably, and who manifested at this moment, by every means in their power, strong attachment to him and to the government. These men had been exposed to some trial, and might be called upon to resist great temptations of passion and interest. On his own part, my father knew the risk he ran, but he braved it. Resident as he had long been

in Ireland, his established character, his property, and his large family, afforded altogether so strong a pledge of his good intentions, that he considered himself as in a situation to set an example of that conduct, which he thought most advantageous for the country. The corps of Edgeworth-Town Infantry was raised, and my father's nephew, Mr. Fox, who had been Lieutenant Colonel of the Longford militia, was appointed one of the Lieutenants; but the arms were, by some mistake of the ordnance-office, delayed. The anxiety for their arrival was extreme, for every day and every hour the French were expected to land.

The alarm was now so general, that many sent their families out of the country. My father was still in hopes, that we might safely remain. At the first appearance of disturbance in Ireland he had offered to carry his sisters-in-law, the Mrs. Sneyds, to their friends in England, but this offer they refused. Of the domestics, three men were English and Protestant, two Irish and Catholic; the women were all Irish and Catholic, excepting the housekeeper, an English woman, who had lived with us many years. There were no dissensions or suspicions between the Catholics and Protestants in the family, and the English servants did not desire to quit us at this crisis.

At last came the dreaded news. The French, who landed at Killala, were, as we learned, on their march towards Longford. The touch of Ithuriel's spear could not have been more sudden or effectual, than the arrival of this intelligence, in shewing people in their real forms. In some faces joy struggled for a moment with feigned sorrow, and then, encouraged

by sympathy, yielded to the *natural* expression. Still my father had no reason to distrust those, in whom he had placed confidence; his tenants were steady; he saw no change in any of the men of his corps, though they were in the most perilous situation, having rendered themselves obnoxious to the rebels and invaders, by becoming yeomen, and yet standing without means of resistance or defence, their arms not having arrived.

The evening of the day, when the news of the success and approach of the French came to Edgeworth-Town, all seemed quiet; but early the next morning, September 4th, a report reached us, that the rebels were *up* in arms within a mile of the village, pouring in from the county of Westmeath, hundreds strong. Such had been the tranquillity of the preceding night, that we could not at first believe their report. — An hour afterwards it was contradicted. An English servant, who was sent out to ascertain the truth, brought back word, that he had ridden three miles from the village on the road described, and that he had seen only twenty or thirty men with green boughs in their hats, and pikes in their hands, who said, "*that they were standing there to protect themselves against the Orangemen, of whom they were in dread, and who, as they heard, were coming down to cut them to pieces.*" This was all nonsense; but no better sense could be obtained. Report upon report, equally foolish, was heard, or at least uttered. But this much being certain, that men armed with pikes were assembled, my father sent off an express to the next garrison town (Longford), requesting the commanding officer to send him assistance for the defence of this place. He desired us to

be prepared to set out at a moment's warning. We were under this uncertainty, when an escort with an ammunition cart passed through the village, on its way to Longford. It contained several barrels of powder, intended to blow up the bridges, and to stop the progress of the enemy. One of the officers of the party rode up to our house, and offered to let us have the advantage of his escort. But, after a few minutes deliberation, this friendly proposal was declined. My father determined, that he would not stir till he knew whether he could have assistance; and as it did not appear as yet absolutely necessary that we should go, we staid—fortunately for us!

About a quarter of an hour after the officer and the escort had departed, we, who were all assembled in the portico of the house, heard a report like a loud clap of thunder. The doors and windows shook with some violent concussion; a few minutes afterwards, the officer galloped into the yard, and threw himself off his horse into my father's arms almost senseless. The ammunition cart had blown up, one of the officers had been severely wounded, and the horses and the man leading them killed; the wounded officer was at a farm-house on the Longford road, at about two miles distance. The fear of the rebels was now suspended, in concern for this accident. Mrs. Edgeworth went immediately to give her assistance; she left her carriage for the use of the wounded gentleman, and rode back. At the entrance of the village she was stopped by a gentleman in great terror, who, taking hold of the bridle of her horse, begged her not to attempt to go further, assuring her that the rebels were coming into the town. But she answered, that she must and would return to her family.

She rode on, and found us waiting anxiously for her. No assistance could be afforded from Longford; the rebels were reassembling, and advancing towards the village; and there was no alternative, but to leave our home as fast as possible. One of our carriages having been left with the wounded officer, we had but one other at this moment for our whole family, eleven in number. No mode of conveyance could be had for some of the female servants; our faithful English housekeeper offered to stay till the return of the carriage, which had been left with the officer; and as we could not carry her, we were obliged, most reluctantly, to leave her behind to follow, as we hoped, immediately. As we passed through the village, we heard nothing but the entreaties, lamentations, and objurgations of those who could not procure the means of carrying off their goods or their families: most painful when we could give no assistance.

Next to the safety of his own family, my father's greatest anxiety was for his defenceless corps. No men could behave better than they did at this first moment of trial. Not one absented himself, though many, living at a distance, might, if they had been so inclined, have found plausible excuses for non-appearance. The bugle was not sounded to call them together, but they were in their ranks in the street the moment they had their captain's orders, declaring, that whatever he commanded they would do. He ordered them to march to Longford. The idea of going to Longford could not be agreeable to many of them, who were Catholics; because that town was full of those who called themselves—I would avoid using party names if I could, but I can

no otherwise make the facts intelligible — who called themselves Orangemen, and who were not supposed to have favourable opinions of any of another religious persuasion. There was no reluctance shewn, however, by the Catholics of this corps to go among them. The moment the word *march* was uttered by their captain, they marched with alacrity. — One of my brothers, a youth of fifteen, was in their ranks: another, twelve years old, marched with them.

We expected every instant to hear the shout of the rebels entering Edgeworth-Town. When we had got about half a mile out of the village, my father suddenly recollected, that he had left on his table a paper, containing a list of his corps; and that, if this should come into the hands of the rebels, it might be of dangerous consequence to his men; it would serve to point out their houses for pillage, and their families for destruction. He turned his horse instantly, and galloped back. The time of his absence appeared immeasurably long, but he returned safely, after having destroyed the dangerous paper.

About two miles from the village was the spot, where the ammunition cart had been blown up; the dead horses, swollen to an unnatural bulk, were lying across the road. As we approached, we saw two men in an adjoining field looking at the remains of one of the soldiers, who had been literally blown to pieces. They ran towards us, and we feared, that they were rebels going to stop us. They jumped over the ditch, and seized our bridles; but with friendly intent. With no small difficulty they dragged us past the dead horses, saying, "God speed you! and make haste any way!" We were very

ready to take their advice. After this, on the six long miles of the road from Edgeworth-Town to Longford, we did not meet a human being. It was all silent and desert, as if every creature had fled from the cabins by the road side.

Longford was crowded with yeomanry of various corps, and with the inhabitants of the neighbourhood, who had flocked thither for protection. With great difficulty the poor Edgeworth-Town infantry found lodgings. We were cordially received by the landlady of a good inn. Though her house was, as she said, "fuller than it could hold," yet she, being an old friend of my father's, did contrive to give us two rooms, in which we eleven were thankful to find ourselves.

All our concern now was for those we had left behind. We heard nothing of our housekeeper all night, and were exceedingly alarmed: but early the next morning, to our great joy, she arrived. She told us, that after we had left her, she waited hour after hour for the carriage: she could hear nothing of it, as it had gone to Longford with the wounded officer. Towards evening, a large body of rebels entered the village. She heard them at the gate, and expected that they would have broken in the next instant. But one, who seemed to be a leader, with a pike in his hand, set his back against the gate, and swore, that, "if he was to die for it the next minute, he would have the life of the first man, who should open that gate, or set enemy's foot within side of that place. He said the housekeeper, who was left in it, was a good gentlewoman, and had done him a service, though *she did not know him, nor he her.* He had never seen her face, but she had, the year

before, lent his wife, when in distress, sixteen shillings, the rent of flax-ground, and he would stand her friend now.

He kept back the mob; they agreed to send him to the house with a deputation of six, *to know the truth*, and to ask for arms. The six men went to the back-door, and summoned the housekeeper; one of them pointed his blunderbuss at her, and told her, that she must fetch all the arms in the house; she said she had none. Her champion asked her to say if she remembered him—"No; to her knowledge she had never seen his face." He asked if she remembered having lent a woman money to pay her rent of flax-ground the year before? "Yes," she remembered that, and named the woman, the time, and the sum. His companions were thus satisfied of the truth of what he had asserted. He bid her not to be *frighted*, "for that no harm should happen to her, nor any belonging to her; not a soul should get leave to go into her master's house; not a twig should be touched, nor a leaf harmed." His companions huzzaed and went off. Afterwards, as she was told, he mounted guard at the gate during the whole time the rebels were in the town.

When the carriage at last returned, it was stopped by the rebels, who filled the street; they held their pikes to the horses and to the coachman's breast, accusing him of being an Orange-man, because, as they said, he wore the orange colours (our livery being yellow and brown). A painter, a friend of ours, who had been that day at our house, copying some old family portraits, happened to be in the street at that instant, and called out to the mob, "*Gentlemen, it is yellow!—gentlemen, it is not*

orange." In consequence of this happy distinction they let go the coachman; and the same man, who had mounted guard at the gate, came up with his friends, rescued the carriage, and surrounding the coachman with their pikes brought him safely into the yard. The pole of the carriage having been broken in the first onset, the housekeeper could not leave Edgeworth-Town till morning. She passed the night in walking up and down, listening and watching, but the rebels returned no more, and thus our house was saved by the gratitude of a single individual.

We had scarcely time to rejoice in the escape of our housekeeper, and safety of our house, when we found, that new dangers arose even from this escape. Even from the house being spared jealousy and suspicion arose in the minds of many, who at this time saw every thing through the midst of party prejudice. The dislike to my father's corps appeared every hour more strong. He saw the consequences, that might arise from the slightest breaking out of quarrel. It was not possible for him to send his men, unarmed as they still were, to their homes, lest they should be destroyed by the rebels; yet the officers of the other corps wished to have them ordered out of the town, and to this effect joined in a memorial to government. Some of these officers disliked my father, from differences of electioneering interests; others, from his not having kept up an acquaintance with them; and others, not knowing him in the least, were misled by party reports and misrepresentations.

These petty dissensions were, however, at one moment suspended and forgotten in a general sense of danger. An express arrived late one night, with

the news that the French, who were rapidly advancing, were within a few miles of the town of Longford. A panic seized the people. There were in the town eighty of the carabineers and two corps of yeomanry, but it was proposed to evacuate the garrison. My father strongly opposed this measure, and undertook, with fifty men, if arms and ammunition were supplied, to defend the gaol of Longford, where there was a strong pass, at which the enemy might be stopped. He urged, that a stand might be made there, till the king's army should come up. The offer was gladly accepted—men, arms, ammunition, all he could want or desire, were placed at his disposal. He slept that night in the gaol, with every thing prepared for its defence; but the next morning fresh news came, that the French had turned off from the Longford road, and were going towards Granard; of this, however, there was no certainty. My father, by the desire of the commanding officer, rode out to reconnoitre, and my brother went to the top of the court-house with a telescope for the same purpose. We (Mrs. Edgeworth, my aunts, my sisters, and myself) were waiting to hear the result in one of the upper sitting-rooms of the inn, which fronted the street. We heard a loud shout, and going to the window, we saw the people throwing up their hats, and heard huzzas. An express had arrived with news, that the French and the rebels had been beaten; that General Lake had come up with them at a place called Ballynamuck, near Granard; that 1,500 rebels and French were killed, and that the French generals and officers were prisoners.

We were impatient for my father, when we heard this joyful news; he had not yet returned, and we

looked out of the windows in hopes of seeing him, but we could see only a great number of the people of the town, shaking hands with each other. This lasted a few minutes, and then the crowd gathered in silence round one man, who spoke with angry vehemence and gesticulation; stamping, and frequently wiping his forehead. We thought he was a mountebank haranguing the populace, till we saw, that he wore a uniform. Listening with curiosity to make out what he was saying, we observed, that he looked up towards us, and we thought we heard him pronounce the names of my father and brother in tones of insult. We could scarcely believe what we heard him say. Pointing up to the top of the court-house, he exclaimed,

"*That* young Edgeworth ought to be dragged down from the top of that house." Our housekeeper burst into the room, so much terrified she could hardly speak.

"My master, ma'm—it is all against my master, the mob say they will tear him to pieces, if they catch hold of him. They say he's a traitor, that he *illuminated* the gaol to deliver it up to the French."

No words can give an idea of our astonishment. *Illuminated!* what could be meant by the gaol being illuminated? My father had literally but two farthing candles, by the light of which he had been reading the newspaper late the preceding night. These however were said to be signals for the enemy! The absurdity of the whole was so glaring, that we could scarcely conceive the danger to be real; but our pale landlady's fears were urgent, she dreaded that her house should be pulled down. We found, that the danger was not the less because the accusation was false; on the contrary, it was great in proportion to its

absurdity, for the people who could at once be under such a perversion of intellects, and such an illusion of their senses, must indeed be in a state of frenzy.

The crowd had by this time removed from before the windows; but we heard, that they were gone to that end of the town, through which they expected Mr. Edgeworth to return.

We sent immediately to the commanding officer, informing him of what we had heard, and requesting his advice and assistance. He came to us, and recommended, that we should despatch a messenger to warn Mr. E. of his danger, and to request, that he would not return to Longford this day. The officer added, that, in consequence of the rejoicings for the victory, his men would probably be all drunk in a few hours, and that he could not answer for them. This officer, a captain of yeomanry, was a good-natured, but inefficient man, who spoke under considerable nervous agitation, and seemed desirous to do all he could, but not to be able to do any thing. We wrote instantly, and with difficulty found a man, who undertook to convey the note. It was to be carried to meet him on one road, and Mrs. Edgeworth and I determined to drive out to meet him on the other. We made our way down to the inn yard, where the carriage was ready. Several gentlemen spoke to us as we got into the carriage, begging us not to be alarmed: Mrs. Edgeworth answered, that she was more surprised than alarmed. The commanding officer and the sovereign of Longford walked by the side of the carriage through the town; and as the mob believed, that we were going away not to return, we got through without molestation. We went a few miles on the road towards Edgeworth-

Town, till at a tenant's house we heard, that my father had passed by half an hour ago; that he was riding in company with an officer, supposed to be of Lord Cornwallis's or General Lake's army; that they had taken a *short cut*, which led into Longford by another entrance. Most fortunately not that at which an *armed* mob had assembled, expecting the object of their fury. Seeing him return to the inn with an officer of the king's army, they imagined, as we were afterwards told, that he was brought back a prisoner, and they were satisfied.

The moment we saw him safe, we laughed at our own fears, and again doubted the reality of the danger, more especially as he treated the idea with the utmost incredulity and scorn.

Major (now General) Eustace was the officer who returned with him. He dined with us; every thing appeared quiet. The persons who had taken refuge at the inn were now gone to their homes, and it was supposed, that, whatever dispositions to riot had existed, the news of the approach of some of Lord Cornwallis's suite, or of troops who were to bring in the French prisoners, would prevent all probability of disturbance. In the evening the prisoners arrived at the inn; a crowd followed them, but quietly. A sun-burnt coarse looking man, in a huge cocked hat, with a quantity of gold lace on his clothes, seemed to fix all attention; he was pointed out as the French General Homberg, or Sarrazin. As he dismounted from his horse, he threw the bridle over its neck, and looked at the animal as if he felt that he was his only friend.

We heard my father in the evening ask Major Eustace, to walk with him through the town to the

barrack yard to evening parade; and we saw them go out together, without our feeling the slightest apprehension. We remained at the inn. By this time Col. Handfield, Major Cannon, and some other officers, had arrived, and were at dinner in a parlour on the ground-floor, under our room. It being hot weather, the windows were open. Nothing now seemed to be thought of but rejoicings for the victory. Candles were preparing for an illumination; waiters, chambermaids, landlady, all hands were busy scooping turnips and potatoes for candlesticks, to stand in every pane of every loyal window.

In the midst of this preparation about half an hour after my father had left us, we heard a great uproar in the street. At first we thought the shouts were only rejoicings for victory, but as they came nearer we heard screechings and yellings, indescribably horrible. A mob had gathered at the gates of the barrack-yard, and joined by many soldiers of the yeomanry on leaving parade, had followed Major Eustace and my father from the barracks. The major being this evening in colored clothes, the people no longer knew him to be an officer; nor conceived, as they had done before, that Mr. Edgeworth was his prisoner. The mob had not contented themselves with the horrid yells that we had heard, but had been pelting them with hard turf, stones, and brickbats. From one of these my father received a blow on the side of his head, coming with such force as to stagger, and almost to stun him; but he kept himself up, knowing that if once he fell he should be trampled under foot. He walked on steadily till he came within a few yards of the inn, when one of the mob seized hold of Major Eustace by the collar.

My father seeing the windows of the inn open, called with a loud voice, "Major Eustace is in danger!"

The officers who were at dinner, and who till that moment had supposed the noise in the street to be only drunken rejoicings, immediately ran out. At the sight of British officers and drawn swords, the populace gave way, and dispersed in different directions.

The preparation for the illuminations then went on, as if nothing had intervened. All the panes of our windows in the front room were in a blaze of light by the time the mob returned through the street. The night passed without further disturbance.

As early as we could the next morning we left Longford, and returned homewards, all danger from rebels being now over, the rebellion having been terminated by the late battle.

When we came near Edgeworth-Town, we saw many well-known faces at the cabin doors, looking out to welcome us. One man, who was sitting on the bank of a ditch by the road side, when he looked up as our horses passed, and saw my father, clasped his hands and blessed our return; his face, as the morning sun shone upon it, was the strongest picture of joy I ever saw. The village was a melancholy spectacle; windows shattered, and doors broken. But though the mischief done was great, there had been little pillage. Within our gates we found all property safe; literally "not a twig touched, nor a leaf harmed." Within the house every thing was as we had left it—a map that we had been consulting was still open on the library table, with pencils, and slips of paper containing the lessons in arithmetic, in which some of the young people had been engaged the morning we had been driven from home; a pansy,

in a glass of water, which one of the children had been drawing, was still on the chimney-piece. These trivial circumstances, marking repose and tranquillity, struck us at this moment with an unreasonable sort of surprise, and all that had passed seemed like an incoherent dream. The joy of having my father in safety remained, and gratitude to Heaven for his preservation. These feelings spread inexpressible pleasure over what seemed to be a new sense of existence. Even the most common things appeared delightful; the green lawn, the still groves, the birds singing, the fresh air, all external nature, and all the goods and conveniences of life, seemed to have wonderfully increased in value, from the fear into which we had been put of losing them irrecoverably.

The first thing my father did, the day we came home, was to draw up a memorial to the Lord Lieutenant, desiring to have a court-martial held on the serjeant, who, by haranguing the populace, had raised the mob at Longford; his next care was to walk through the village, to examine what damage had been done by the rebels, and to order that repairs of all his tenants' houses should be made at his expense. A few days after our return, Government ordered that the arms of the Edgeworth-Town infantry should be forwarded by the commanding officer at Longford. Through the whole of their hard week's trial, the corps had, without any exception, behaved perfectly well. It was perhaps more difficult to honest and brave men passively to bear such a trial, than to encounter any to which they could have been exposed in action.

When the arms for the corps arrived, my father, in delivering them to the men, thanked them publicly

for their conduct, assuring them, that he would remember it, whenever he should have opportunities of serving them, collectively or individually. In long after years, as occasions arose, each, who continued to deserve it, found in him a friend, and felt that he more than fulfilled his promise. Looking back upon suspicions and accusations, now that events had decided upon guilt and innocence, and had shown who were, and who were not, implicated in this rebellion, he had the satisfaction of feeling, that, though he had trusted much, he had seldom trusted rashly. In some instances he was deceived.—Who in Ireland at that time can boast, that he was not? Some few, very few indeed, of his tenantry, on a remote estate—alas too near Ballynamuck, did join the rebels! These persons were never readmitted on my father's estate. But it was difficult in certain cases to know what ought to be done: for instance, with regard to the man who had saved our house from pillage, but who had certainly been joined with the rebels. It was the wise policy of Government, to pardon those, who had not been ringleaders in this rebellion; and who, repenting of their folly, were desirous to return to their allegiance, and to their peaceable duties. My father sent for this man, and said he would apply to government for a pardon for him. The man smiled, and clapping his pocket said, "I have my *Corny* here safe already, I thank your Honour—else sure I would not have been such a fool, as to be shewing myself without I had a *purtection*."—A pardon, signed by the Lord Lieutenant, Lord Cornwallis, in their witty spirit of abbreviation, they called a *Corny*.

When my father said, that, however much we

were obliged to him for saving the house, we could not *reward* him for being a rebel; he answered, "Oh, I know that I could not expect it, nor look for any thing at all, but what I got — *thanks*." With these words he went away, satisfied that though my father gave him nothing at this time his honor would never *forget him*.

A considerable time afterward my father, finding that the man conducted himself well, took an opportunity of serving him. Rewards my father thought fully as necessary and as efficacious as punishments, for the good government of human creatures: therefore he took especial care, not only to punish those who had done ill, but to reward, as far as he could, all who had done well.

Before we quit this subject, it may be useful to record, that the French generals, who headed this invasion, declared they had been completely deceived as to the state of Ireland. They had expected to find the people in open rebellion, or, at least, in their own phrase, *organised* for insurrection; but to their dismay, they found only ragamuffins, *canaille*, as they called them, who, in joining their standard, did them infinitely more harm than good. It is a pity, that the lower Irish could not hear the contemptuous manner in which the French, both officers and soldiers, spoke of them and of their country. The generals described the stratagems, which had been practised upon them by their good allies. The same rebels frequently returning with different tones and new stories, to obtain double and treble provisions of arms, ammunition, and uniforms — selling the ammunition for whiskey, and running away at the first fire in the day of battle. The French, detesting and

despising those by whom they had been thus cheated, pillaged, and deserted, called them beggars, rascals, and savages. They cursed also without scruple their own Directory, for sending them, after they had, as they boasted, conquered the world, to be at last beaten in an Irish bog. Officers and soldiers joined in swearing, that they would never return to a country, where they could find neither bread, wine, nor discipline; and where the people lived on roots, whiskey, and lying.

These, as my father observed, were comfortable words for Ireland. National antipathy thus felt and expressed between the invaders and the Irish malcontents, would be better security for the future quiet and safety of the country even than the victory. Full of these thoughts, unconcerned about himself, and in excellent spirits, he succeeded in turning our attention to new objects. The Longford mob completely vanished from our imagination. Reflecting upon what had passed, my father drew from it one useful conclusion for his own future conduct—that he ought to mix more with society, and make himself more generally known in Ireland.

At all times it is disadvantageous to those who have the reputation of being men of superior abilities, to seclude themselves from the world. It raises a belief, that they despise those with whom they do not associate; and this supposed contempt creates real aversion. The being accused of pride or singularity may not, perhaps, in the estimation of some lofty spirits and independent characters, appear too great a price to pay for liberty and leisure; they may care little if they be misunderstood or misrepresented by the vulgar; they trust to truth

and time, to do them justice. This may be all well in ordinary life, and in peaceable days: but in civil commotions, the best and the wisest, if he have not made himself publickly known so as to connect himself with the interests and feelings of his neighbours, will find none to answer for his character, if it be attacked, or to warn him of the secret machinations of his enemies; none who on any sudden emergency will risk their own safety in his defence: he may fall, and be trampled upon by numbers, simply because it is nobody's business or pleasure to rally to his aid. Time and reason may right his character, and may bring all who have injured, or all who have mistaken him to repentance and shame, but in the interval he *must* suffer—he *may* perish. There is no absurdity of ignorance, or grossness of calumny, from which he may hope to be secure. He may be conceived to be a traitor, because he would not be a tyrant; he may be called a rebel, for offering to defend a loyal garrison; and may well nigh be torn to pieces by a mob, for having read the newspapers by two farthing candles.

CHAPTER IX.

Government, having at this time the union between Great Britain and Ireland in contemplation, were desirous, that the Irish aristocracy and country gentlemen should be convinced of the kingdom's insufficiency to her own defence, either against invasion or internal insurrection; with this view it was politic to let the different parties struggle with each other till they completely felt their weakness and their danger. It was said, with what justice I do not presume to determine, that with this view the *Orange-men* and *United Irishmen*, the *Ribbon-men*, the *Thrashers*, the *Croppies*, the *Caravats*, the *Shanavats*, or by whatever other names, more savage or more ridiculous, they called themselves, were let loose upon each other. It is certain, that the combinations of the disaffected at home, and the advance of foreign invaders, were not checked till the peril became imminent, and till the purpose of creating universal alarm had been fully effected. As soon as the Lord Lieutenant, who was at that time commander in chief, exerted his full military and civil power, the invaders were defeated, and the rebellion was extinguished. The nightly depredations, and the nocturnal *scouring of the country* ceased; the dogs of war were recalled, and the havoc ended. Those would-be-soldiers, who under the cry

of loyalty, had become hunters of men, found their occupation gone. They were obliged to recur to their former sports, and, in the uniform of a hunt, instead of the uniform of a military corps, to content themselves with pursuing no "other game than beast or bird." The petty magisterial tyrants, who had been worse than vain of their little brief authority, were put down, or rather, being no longer upheld, sunk to their original and natural insignificance. The laws returned to their due course; and, with justice, security and tranquillity were restored.

My father used his utmost endeavours to obliterate all that could tend to perpetuate ill-will in the country, and in his own case set the example of forgiveness.

It is a pervading sentiment with the poor that legal revenge is one of the sweetest luxuries, which wealth puts in the power of their superiors in station. Assuredly my father did some service in his neighbourhood, by shewing, that it was not among the number of his luxuries, and by discountenancing the habit of indulging in this perverted taste.

The lower Irish are such acute observers, that there is no deceiving them as to the state of the real feelings of their superiors. They know the signs of what passes within, more perfectly than any physiognomist, who ever studied the human face, or human head. Combining quickly every circumstance in the manners, gestures, and slightest actions, of those, whom it is their interest to study; the result is, that the ruling, or the reigning passion can scarcely escape their detection. It was soon seen, however, by all of those who had any connexion with him, that my father was sincere in his disdain of vengeance,—of

this they had convincing proof in his refusing to listen to the tales of slander, which many were ready to pour into his ear, against those who had appeared to be his enemies. Even in his determination to have a public trial of the man who had instigated the Longford mob, they saw that this was only for the sake of justice, and not from any paltry motives of personal resentment. This was proved by his conduct in the course of the trial. As soon as it became apparent that this man was a mere ignorant enthusiast, who had been worked up to phrenzy by persons more designing than himself; and as soon as he shewed that he was penitent, and ashamed of what he had done, my father would not press the evidence against him, but ordered his counsel to desist, and to let the poor culprit be acquitted.

The judge who presided at the trial was Sir Michael Smith, whose charge was able and eloquent; honourable to himself as it was to my father.

His thoughts were soon called from this affair to that most important question, which it was expected would be discussed at the approaching meeting of Parliament—of the union between England and Ireland.

On the subject of the union he had not yet been able, in parliamentary phrase, *to make up his mind;* he went to the house in that state, in which so many profess to find themselves, and so few ever really are, anxious to hear the arguments on both sides, and open to be decided by whoever could shew him that, which was best for his country.

The debate on the first proposal of the union was protracted to an unusual length, and when he rose to

speak, it was late at night, or rather it was early in the morning, two o'clock—the house had been so wearied, that many of the members were asleep. It was an inauspicious moment. No person present, not even the speaker, who was his intimate friend, could tell on which side he would vote.—Curiosity was excited: some of the outstretched members were roused by their neighbours, whose anxiety to know on which side Mr. E. would vote prompted them to encourage him to proceed. Curiosity was kept alive as he went on; and when people perceived, that it was not a *set* speech, they became more and more interested. Stating his doubts just as they really occurred, balancing the arguments as he threw them by turns into each scale, and as they balanced one another in his judgment, the doubtful beam nodded from side to side, while all watched to see when its vibrations would settle. Both parties were in good humour, because each expected to have him their own at last. After stating many arguments in favour of what appeared to him to be the advantages of the union, he ended by declaring that he must give his vote against it, because, he said, he had been convinced by what he had heard in that house this night, that the union was at this moment decidedly against the wishes of the great majority of men of sense and property in the nation. He added, that if, at the final discussion of the question, he should be convinced that the opinion of the country was changed, his vote would be in favour of the union.

One of the anti-unionists, who happened not to know my father personally, imagined from his accent, style, and manner of speaking, that he was an Englishman; and accused Government of having brought a

new member over from England, to impose him upon the house as an impartial country gentleman, who was to make a pretence of liberality by giving a vote against the union, while by arguing in its favour, he was to make converts for the measure. Many on the ministerial bench, who had still hopes, that on a future occasion Mr. E. might be *convinced*, and brought to vote with them, complimented him highly, declaring that they were completely surprised, when they learnt how he voted; for that undoubtedly the best arguments on their side of the question had been produced in his speech.

This session my father had the satisfaction of turning the attention of the house to a subject, which he considered to be of greater and more permanent importance than the union, or than any merely political measure could prove to his country, *the education of the people*. By his exertions, a select committee was appointed, and they adopted the resolutions drawn up by him. When the report of this committee was brought up to the house, my father spoke at large upon the subject, and leave was granted to bring in a bill for the improvement of the education of the people of Ireland; from this proceeded, after the Irish Parliament was no more, the appointment of a Board and Commissioners of Education.

The following letters to Dr. Darwin will shew the effect produced by a political campaign on my father's private feelings:

"*March* 12, 1799.

"MY DEAR DOCTOR,

"One morning in the year 1791, when you were confined to your bed, and asked me to come into your room at Derby to take leave of you, you told me, that if ever I went into Parliament I

should be torn to pieces by the teeth and fangs of the parliamentary leaders; but in truth, my dear Doctor, I have found them very harmless creatures as to myself individually, though I acknowledge, that some of them can tear their country to pieces with all possible ferocity.

" I then told you I was not ambitious, and I continue to be of the same opinion. For though I have not been entirely unsuccessful in gaining the attention of the House, I do not feel one jot the more disposed to become a commissioner of the revenue, a sinecure placeman, or a pensioner.

" In the shock of contending parties, seizing a moment of temporary calm, I found an opportunity of laying the foundation of a system of education, by which the wretched poor of this country may in time be rendered less savage. * * *

" God bless you, my dear Doctor, and keep all evil from you, from your good and amiable lady, and from your *giant brood.*

" Yours, affectionately,

" R. L. E."

TO THE SAME.

" *March* 31, 1800.

" MY DEAR AND EXCELLENT FRIEND,

" Words which are not meant as a mere translation of '*vir excellentissime,*' but which really express my feelings and opinions. I have been absent from home upon the business of the nation. The fatigue of the session was enormous. I am a unionist, but I vote and speak against the union now proposed to us—as to my reasons, are they not published in the reports of our debates? &c.

" It is intended to force this measure down the throats of the Irish, though five sixths of the nation are against it. Now, though I think such a union as would identify the nations, so as that Ireland should be as Yorkshire to Great Britain, would be an excellent thing; yet I also think, that the good people of Ireland ought to be *persuaded* of this truth, and not to be dragooned into submission.

" The minister avows, that seventy-two boroughs are to be compensated—*i. e.* bought by the people of Ireland with one million and a half of their own money; and he makes this legal by a small majority, made up chiefly of these very borough members. When thirty-eight county members out of sixty-four are against the measure, and *twenty-eight* counties out of *thirty-two*

have petitioned against it, this is such abominable corruption, that it makes our parliamentary sanction worse than ridiculous.

" I had the honour of offering, for myself and for a large number of other gentlemen, that, if the minister could by any means win the nation to the measure, and shew us even a small preponderance in his favour, we would vote with him.

" So far for politics. I had a charming opportunity of advancing myself and my family, but I did not think it wise *to quarrel with myself*, and lose my own good opinion at my time of life. What *did* lie in my way for my vote I will not say, but I stated in my place in the House, that I had been offered 3000 guineas for my seat during the few remaining weeks of the session.

" Maria continues writing for children, under the persuasion that she cannot be employed more serviceably.

" I shall now resume my pen, with the same sincere intention of being useful, and I shall write and draw Mechanoiconomia, or a Description of Machinery for Domestic Purposes.

" I have not yet received the whole of Phytologia. Not one copy has yet made its appearance in Ireland.

" I am just going, at the desire of a national institution, similar to your Board of Agriculture, to begin an Agricultural, Economic, and Statistic Account of this County, in which I shall make free with your information.—By the by, I used your name in two debates this session with effect.

" Yours,

" R. L. E."

To the view which his letters exhibit of his sentiments freshly given to his most intimate friend, at the moment when this political question of the union was first discussed, I add the following pages, written by my father many years afterwards:—(in 1817,)

" I was in the Irish Parliament, when the question of a legislative union between Great Britain and Ireland was finally discussed. The part which I took may be known, by the speeches which I then published. One of these is miserably reported, appearing to be faulty both in sense and grammar; they are, however, sufficient to enable my children to decide upon the consistency of my conduct, which has, I hope, never deviated from what appeared to me to be right and honorable. The *influence*

of the Crown was never so strongly exerted as upon this occasion. It is but justice, however, to Lord Cornwallis and Lord Castlereagh, to give it as my opinion, that they *began* this measure with sanguine hopes, that they could convince the reasonable part of the community, that a cordial union between the two countries would essentially advance the interests of both. When, however, the ministry found themselves in a minority, and that a spirit of general opposition was rising in the country, a member of the House, who had been long practised in parliamentary intrigues, had the audacity to tell Lord Castlereagh from his place, that, 'if he did not employ the *usual means of persuasion* on the members of the House, he would fail in his attempt, and that the sooner he set about it the better.'

"This advice was followed; and it was well known, what benches were filled with the proselytes, that had been made by *the convincing arguments*, which obtained a majority. In one of the last sittings of the last session of the last Parliament of Ireland, a distinguished member said he would not sit in that House, to hear its death-warrant read from the chair. It was expected, that he would go out of the House at the close of this speech. When he sat down*, I rose from my seat, went to the bar, and bowing to the Chair, withdrew; I was followed by Mr. George Ponsonby, and by some other members, whose names I do not now remember."

Temptations were held out to my father in every possible form, in which they could *flatter* personal ambition or family interest; he had offers of all that could serve or oblige his dearest friends, and choice of situations, in which he might, as it was said, gratify his peculiar tastes, serve his country, and accomplish his favourite object of improving the education of the people. Opportunity for *convenient*

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* *Note by the Editor.*

I shewed these pages, Sept. 1817, to Mr. Forster, (the Speaker of the Irish House of Commons); and I asked whether he remembered this circumstance: he assured me, that it was perfectly in his recollection. M. E.

distinctions in his case appeared also; since he was avowedly of opinion, that the measure in question would be ultimately advantageous to this country, though he thought the means of carrying it, and the forcing it, at this time, contrary to the sense of the people, was wrong. But, however plausible, he would not admit of any such nice casuistry in a case of conscience; he would not palter with the fiend Ambition.

CHAPTER X.

In the spring of 1799 he went to England. He visited his old friends Mr. Keir, Mr. Watt, Dr. Darwin, and Mr. William Strutt of Derby.

In passing through different parts of the country he saw, and delighted in shewing us, every thing curious and interesting in art and nature. Travelling, he used to say, was from time to time necessary, to change the course of ideas, and to prevent the growth of local prejudices.

He paid his respects to his friend Sir Joseph Banks, attended the meetings of the Royal Society, and met various old acquaintance, whom he had formerly known abroad;—some of them persons of rank and fortune, who, since he had seen them, had much improved from the wildness of youth, and now appeared with mature and sedate characters. He saw also others, whom he had known formerly on the continent, some who had been the tutors or travelling companions of these young noblemen; and who having risen by literature to fame and affluence, were equal, at least in consideration, to those, who, by birth, had been so much their superiors. All these persons recognized my father with cordial pleasure, recollecting every circumstance of his works

at Lyons, of his conduct there, and of the high estimation in which he had been held. These testimonies were peculiarly agreeable coming home to his children and family. Accidental recurrence of the recollection of the friends of a man's youth, and the witnesses of what he has done, and has been, at different periods, should be noticed in every life, as a source of pain or pleasure, self-complacency or self-reproach.

My father's having become an author put it in his power, during this journey, to enlarge his acquaintance in the English literary world. Many men of learning, whom he had formerly known, recognized him with satisfaction, and introduced him to several contemporary authors. Among the friends he formed during this summer in England, and in consequence of the publication of his sentiments on education, was Mrs. Barbauld. Her writings he had long admired for their classical strength and elegance, for their high and true tone of moral and religious feeling, and for their practically useful tendency. She gratified him by accepting an invitation, to pass some time with us at Clifton; and ever afterwards, though at a great distance from each other, her constant friendship for him was a source of great pleasure and just pride.

While we were at Clifton, when Mrs. Edgeworth was recovering after the birth of her first child, her two brothers, the Rev. William Beaufort, and Captain Beaufort*, of the Royal Navy (whom my father had never seen before), came to visit her. It seldom happens, that, when two large families are connected

* Now Hydrographer to the Admiralty. Author of "Karamania—a survey and description of the South Coast of Asia Minor."

by marriage, they suit each other in every branch of the connexion. My father's and Mrs. Edgeworth's families were both numerous, and among such numbers, even granting the dispositions to be excellent, and the understandings cultivated, the chances were against their suiting; but, happily, all the individuals of the two families, though of various talents, ages, and characters, did from their first acquaintance, coalesce.

After he had lost such a friend as Mr. Day, so tried, so faithful, of such superior abilities, of such a generous, noble character, who could have dared to hope, that he should ever have found another equally deserving to possess his whole confidence and affection? yet such a one it pleased God to give him — and to give him in the brother of his wife. And never man felt more strongly grateful for the double blessing. To Captain Beaufort he became as much attached, as he had ever been to Lord Longford, or to Mr. Day.

His father-in-law, Dr. Beaufort, was also particularly agreeable to him as a companion, and useful as a friend.

In the year 1802, at the time of the short peace, many travellers, who had visited the continent, returned enraptured with Paris. Letters and visits from some of these, excited my father's curiosity and interest; he was charmed by their accounts of the literary and scientific society in France. He wished to see their public institutions, and was very desirous, that Mrs. E.'s taste for painting should be gratified by the sight of the superb gallery of the Louvre, were the master-pieces of the finest artists, torn from their native countries, had been forced into one spot; the spoils

of military despotism gracing the triumph of republican liberty.

Among the foreigners, who came to England about this time, was Professor Pictet* of Geneva, brother of the editor of the Journal Britannique, who translated Practical Education, and with whom my father had had some correspondence on the subject. Professor Pictet visited Ireland, and came to Edgeworthstown. He decided us to go abroad, by the kind offers of introduction to numerous literary friends at Paris; a tour was arranged for the ensuing Autumn, and the pleasure of revisiting some of his old English friends, Dr. Darwin in particular, was full in his contemplation, when he received the following letter.

FROM DR DARWIN.

Priory, near Derby, April 17, 1802.

" DEAR EDGEWORTH,

" I am glad to find, that you still amuse yourself with mechanism, in spite of the troubles of Ireland.

" The *use* of turning aside, or downwards, the claw of a table, I don't see; as it must then be reared against a wall, for it will not stand alone. If the use be for carriage, the feet may shut up, like the usual brass feet of a reflecting telescope.

" We have all been now removed from Derby about a fortnight, to the Priory, and all of us like our change of situation. We have a pleasant house, a good garden, ponds full of fish, and a pleasing valley somewhat like Shenstone's—deep, umbrageous, and with a talkative stream running down it. Our house is near the top of the valley, well screened by hills from the east, and north, and open to the south, where, at four miles distance, we see Derby tower.

" Four or more strong springs rise near the house, and have formed the valley, which, like that of Petrarch, may be called *Val chiusa*, as it begins, or is shut,at the situation of the house. I hope you like the description, and hope farther, that yourself and any part of your family will sometime do us the pleasure of a visit.

* Author of " Voyage en Angleterre."

" Pray tell the authoress, that the water-nymphs of our valley will be happy to assist her next novel.

" My bookseller, Mr. Johnson, will not begin to print the Temple of Nature, till the price of paper is fixed by Parliament. I suppose the present duty is paid * * * * * *

At these words Dr. Darwin's pen stopped. What follows was written on the opposite side of the paper by another hand.

" Sir,

" This family is in the greatest affliction. I am truly grieved to inform you of the death of the invaluable Dr. Darwin. Dr. Darwin got up apparently in health; about eight o'clock, he rang the library bell. The servant, who went, said, he appeared fainting. He revived again,—Mrs. Darwin was immediately called. The Doctor spoke often, but soon appeared fainting; and died about nine o'clock.

" Our dear Mrs. Darwin and family are inconsolable: their affliction is great indeed, there being few such husbands or fathers. He will be most deservedly lamented by all, who had the honor to be known to him.

" I remain, Sir,

" Your obedient humble Servant,

" S. M.

" P. S.—This letter was begun this morning by Dr. Darwin himself."

The shock, which my father felt, must in some degree be experienced by every person, who reads this letter, where the playfulness of the beginning is in such awful contrast to the end.

As it had happened after the loss of his friend Mr. Day, my father was after the death of Dr. Darwin called upon by his widow, to write the life of this still more celebrated friend. In Mrs. Darwin's wish his sons strongly joined; but difficulties occurred, the intended publication was forestalled by the appearance of Miss Seward's Memoirs of Darwin.

Of these, and of the general merit of the biographer, and of the poet, the public have necessarily formed their judgment; but there occurred one point, which, as it depends much on private opinion and evidence, seemed subject to appeal; and as it affects more the moral character than the literary fame of Darwin, appeared to call for the vindication of friendship. The following letter was addressed to one, whose generous spirit my father loved even more than he admired that genius, which all the world of literature reveres.

TO WALTER SCOTT.

"*Edgeworths-town*,
" DEAR SIR, *Feb.* 3d, 1812.

" Scales and the sword are emblems as properly suited to the chair of the critic, as to the seat of the municipal justice. I do not therefore hesitate to represent to your court, that an imputation against the fairness of Dr. Darwin's character as an author has been sanctioned by your tribunal, without sufficient evidence to support it.

" It had been said by Miss Seward, that the Doctor had inserted some of her poetry in his Botanic Garden, without making any acknowledgment of his having received it from her; and hence it is concluded, that he meant to pass her verses for his own.

" I was at Lichfield when the lines in question were written by Miss Seward, and I considered them as complimentary to the Doctor, but not as an offering of assistance. The Doctor had not at that time formed the scheme of the Botanic Garden; but many of the lines, which it contains, had been seen by his friends, several years before the garden, which became the theme of his poetry, was in existence. Doctor Darwin composed and wrote the detached pictures in his poem, as he travelled in his carriage among his patients; and these lines were shown from time to time to his intimate acquaintance, before they were arranged, as they now appear, in one collection. Among these friends I had the honor to be ranked; and for one, I steadily combated his intention of giving to them the form and name, which are before the public. I suggested the scheme of a poetical

pantheon, to which the Doctor listened; but he could not prevail upon himself to untwine the amatorial bands, by which he had married the lovesick beings of his vegetable world.

"When I received the printed copy of his work, I expressed my surprise at seeing Miss Seward's lines at the beginning of the poem. He replied, that it was a compliment, which he thought himself bound to pay to the lady, though the verses were not of the same tenor as his own.

"Miss Seward's ode to Captain Cook stands deservedly high in the public opinion. Now, to my certain knowledge, most of the passages, which have been selected in the various reviews of that work, were written by Doctor Darwin. Indeed they bear such strong internal marks of the Doctor's style of composition, that they may easily be distinguished by any reader, who will take the trouble to select them. I remember them distinctly to have been his, and to have read them aloud before Miss Seward and Doctor Darwin, in presence of Sir Brooke Boothby, who will corroborate my assertion.

"I knew the late Doctor Darwin well, and it was as far from his temper and habits, as it was unnecessary to his acquirements, to beg, borrow, or steal from any person upon earth.

"The indifference of friends to living friends is frequently to be deplored. Fewer still will risk any thing, to support the fame of the deceased. I cannot however refrain from endeavouring, to rescue the moral character of a friend, when it is in my power to give perfect evidence, that it has been misrepresented. If I can by any means rescue Dr. Darwin's name from an unmerited censure, I shall think that I have done for him, what, in a similar situation, I am sure he would have done for me.

"I have the honor to be,

"Dear Sir,

"Your most obedient servant,

"Rich. Lovell Edgeworth."

CHAPTER XI.

In the autumn of 1802, my father, with Mrs. Edgeworth, my sisters Emmeline and Charlotte, and myself, went to England, where, in October, 1802, my sister Emmeline was married to John King, Esq., and settled at Clifton. Charlotte, who was then according to the description of a celebrated foreigner, "*jeune personne de seize ans, jolie, fraîche comme la rose,*" accompanied us to Paris.

In passing through England we went to Derby, and to the Priory, to which we had been so kindly invited by him who was now no more. The Priory was all stillness, melancholy, and mourning. It was a painful visit, yet not without satisfaction; for my father's affectionate manner seemed to soothe the widow and daughters of his friend, who were deeply sensible of the respect and zealous regard he shewed for Dr. Darwin's memory.

We pursued our journey to France, and, after a delightful tour through the Low Countries, arrived at Paris, where we were to spend the winter. In the Hotel, Place de Louise Quinze, to which we drove on entering Paris, my father was fortunate in meeting

with his illustrious friend, Mr. Watt.* To him he owed an introduction to many foreigners of celebrity. M. Pictet had, as we found, in the most friendly manner prepared the way for us at Paris; and there he more than kept all his promises of assistance, and of introduction to his numerous literary acquaintance, and to a highly cultivated and agreeable society. He was not in Paris on our arrival; but we had, among other kind friends, in particular the venerable Abbé Morellet. During my father's former residence in France, at the time when he was engaged in directing the works of the Rhone and Saone at Lyons, as he mentions in his Memoirs, he wrote a treatise on the construction of mills. He wished that D'Alembert should read it, to verify the mathematical calculations, and for this purpose he had put it into the hands of Morellet. D'Alembert approved of the essay; and my father became advantageously known to Morellet as a man of science, and as one who had gratuitously and honorably conducted a useful work in France. His predominating taste thus continued, as in former times, its influence, and was still a connecting link between him and new and old friends.

The Abbé Morellet, on renewing his acquaintance with my father, found, that the vivacity, frankness and candour of both their dispositions made them particularly suited to each other. An intimacy im-

* Since this page was written, Mr. Watt died; a hand equal to do justice to his merits, has already given to the public a character of him, who among men of invention and science, is universally considered as the most illustrious of the age, and who in domestic life, has been equally esteemed and beloved for his amiable temper, unassuming manners, and for that simplicity of nature which is one of the characteristics of superior genius.

mediately commenced. It began, however, by a warm debate at a literary breakfast, where an argument arose on the exact meaning of the words *perfectibilité* and *perfectionnement*. To the astonishment of the company, my father, a stranger, a foreigner, speaking the French language but imperfectly, maintained his opinion against *le doyen de la littérature Françoise*. Instead of being offended, the venerable and amiable Abbé wrote him a note early the next morning, acknowledging, that, upon examining the authorities, he found himself in the wrong, and from this time forward he kindly paid my father and his family all possible attention. The high character which Morellet bore, not only for learning and sound judgment, but for moral courage and for the bold consistency of his conduct through the whole of the Revolution, gave him the highest influence in that society in Paris, to which we were ambitious of being introduced, and which was composed of all that remained of the ancient men of letters, and of the most valuable of the nobility.

We felt in this society all the charms of Parisian conversation, the polish and ease, which in its best days distinguished it from that of any other capital. Most grateful my father felt at the time, and long continued to feel, for the kindness and confidence, with which we were treated by many, whom it would gratify, not merely my vanity, but my desire to do honor to his memory, here to enumerate. But knowing well their sentiments on this point, I refrain.

I may, however, without impropriety, be permitted to name those, who, by their stations and talents having publicly distinguished themselves, are in fact

public characters. My father had not only an opportunity of becoming acquainted with the French literati, but with most of the celebrated men of science; particularly civil engineers, and men of invention and skill in mechanics.—M. de Prony, who was then at the head of *les Ponts et Chaussées*, shewed him in the best manner all that to a well-informed engineer was most worthy of notice in the Repository of that celebrated School; put him in the way of seeing every other invention, object, and person, in the mechanical and engineering department; but, above all, he felt grateful for M. de Prony's giving him so much of his own conversation, and for various indubitable proofs of private esteem and confidence.

Le Breton, then one of the principal officers at the Mint, is, as I am informed, at present at the Brazils: if so, there is little chance that the lines I am now writing should ever be seen by him; but, if they should meet his eye, may they convey to his heart the assurance, that my father, as long as he lived, remembered him with *gratitude*, and bequeathed that sentiment to his surviving family!

Berthollet, Montgolfier, and Breguet, gratified him by bestowing that gift, of which philosophers and men of science, occupied upon great objects, and independent of common society, best know the value — their time. It was at this period, that we first became acquainted with our excellent friend, M. Dumont.

This gentleman, so well known by his conversational talents and his exquisite critical acumen, has entitled himself to the gratitude of the literary and political world in general, and of Englishmen in particular, by the successful pains he has bestowed in

arranging, elucidating, and making known to the continent of Europe several valuable English works,* —works, which, notwithstanding their depth of thought and extent of views, would never have acquired popularity, if they had not been re-written in M. Dumont's clear and forcible style.

From the commencement of their friendship in 1802, my father continued to correspond with M. Dumont; and we owe much to his critical advice and sagacity in all our literary pursuits and publications.

One of the first things, that struck my father when he went to Paris, and one which he wished to see imitated in his own country, was the munificent liberality, with which all museums, public libraries, and national institutions are, or *were* open, both to foreigners, and to the natives of the country, without any paltry fees or petty patronage. This example has of late years been happily followed in our own country.

As a member of the English Royal Society, my father was invited to the honors of the sitting at the French Institute; but wishing to claim this privilege in the Royal Irish Academy†, he begged to be permitted to take his seat in the Institute as a member of that Academy, and declined taking it as F.R.S. This was perhaps considered as a waste of patriotic politeness by some English gentlemen then present;

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* Bentham's "*Traités sur la Législation*," and "*Théorie des peines et des récompenses*," &c.

† This Academy was formed in 1785 from a literary society which used to meet weekly in Dublin to read papers and to discuss philosophical subjects. My father was an original member of the Royal Irish Academy.

but on his return home he was thanked for his conduct by Mr. Kirwan, (President of the Royal Irish Academy,) and by those members of that Academy, who were conscious, that their own fame had deservedly reached to foreign countries.

In Paris there is an institution resembling our London Society of Arts; "*La Société d'Encouragement pour l'Industrie Nationale;*" of this my father was made a member, and he presented to it the model of a lock of his invention. In getting this executed, he became acquainted with some of the mechanics in Paris, and had an opportunity of observing how differently work of this kind is carried on there and in Birmingham. Instead of the assemblage of artificers in manufactories, such as we see in Birmingham, each artisan in Paris, working out his own purposes in his own domicile, must in his time "play many parts," and among these many to which he is incompetent, either from want of skill, or want of practice; so that in fact, even supposing French artisans to be of equal ability and industry with English competitors, they are left at least a century behind, by thus being precluded from all the miraculous advantages of the division of labour.

Of course every stranger who goes to Paris, whether he have, or have not, a taste for the arts, visits the great gallery of the Louvre. My father had always been fond of good pictures, but had never turned much of his attention to them, till he married a lady, who had a taste for painting. He now spent hours in the gallery of the Louvre; not to acquire the cant of connoisseurship, but with

a desire to increase his knowledge of the arts, that he might enjoy more fully this subject of sympathy with one, who had bent all her pursuits to his, and who had turned her attention to those sciences, which he particularly liked.

Some people believe, that in marriage those who have different tastes and tempers suit the best. Difference between quick and slow tempers may perhaps be advantageous; because it may happen, that the faults of each may occur at different times, and that each person may bear with the other. But, if the temper be good, and well managed, the pleasure of sympathy will assimilate the tastes, without any danger of competition or jealousy. Indeed, it may be observed, that, where people are sincerely attached, they imperceptibly acquire each other's tastes.

My father had left England with a strong desire to see Buonaparte, and had procured a letter from the Lord Chamberlain (Lord Essex), and had applied to Lord Whitworth, our ambassador at Paris, who was to present him. But soon after our arrival at Paris, he learned that Buonaparte was preparing the way for becoming Emperor, contrary to the wishes and judgment of the most enlightened part of the French nation. Besides private conversations, from which he learned the sentiments of the best friends of France, his eyes were opened to the truth by an eloquent address to the First Consul, which had about this time appeared. The publisher of this address had been arrested; the author, Camille Jourdan, declared and surrendered himself; but so strong was public opinion in the author's favor, that Buona-

parte, who ever warily watched the signs of the times, refrained from any attempt to punish the noble-spirited patriots.*

My father could no longer consider Buonaparte as a great man, abiding by his principles, and content with the true glory of being the first citizen of a free people; but as one meditating usurpation, and on the point of overturning, for the selfish love of dominion, the liberty of France. With this impression, he declared, that he would not go to the court of an usurper.

My father had not the presumption to imagine, that in a cursory view, during a slight tour, and a residence of four or five months at Paris, he could

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* A single passage from this pamphlet may shew the spirit of liberty, which previously to that time had existed in France.—

"Et pour prendre l'exemple qui nous touche de si près, nous avons un Buonaparte, nous en jouissons, nous l'admirons; mais qui nous l'a fait? Notre choix. Que seroit cet homme peut-être, si la gloire de ses aieux l'eut dispensé de la sienne; et puisque nous voulons le continuer dans les siècles, pourquoi ne pas nous confier à la cause puissante qui nous le donna? * * * * * Ainsi point de nom qui puisse enfler le cœur d'un chef, avilir celui de ses administrés, leur faire oublier à toute la relation primitive qui doit subsister entre eux. Serait-il vrai, par exemple, comme des écris ont semblé l'indiquer, que quelques courtissans auraient mèdité de proposer l'adoption de quelque titre *d'Empereur, d'Empereur des Gaules?* Quoi, remonter ainsi dans la nuit des siècles, rechercher pour nous le nom que portaient nos barbares ancêtres quand ils étaient enchaînés par César, et trompés par les Druides! Nous faire abjurer ce doux et beau nom de la France consacré par tous les grands souvenirs de la monarchie, et par tous les triomphes de notre république! * * * * Voir ainsi un féodal *Empereur des Gaules* en tête de la charte libre des généreux Francs. Mais pourquoi s'arrêter à combattre de telles chimères? Et combien l'esprit national, d'accord avec le bon esprit de Buonaparte, doit nous rassurer contre de telles dénominations, si de lâches flatteurs osaient jamais les reproduire."

become thoroughly acquainted with France. Besides, his living chiefly with the select society, which I have described, precluded the possibility of seeing much of what were called *les nouveaux riches*.

The few general observations he made on French society at this time I shall mention. He observed, that among the families of the old nobility, domestic happiness and virtue had much increased since the Revolution, in consequence of the marriages, which, after they lost their wealth and rank, had been formed, not according to the usual fashion of old French alliances, but from disinterested motives, from the perception of the real suitability of tempers and characters. The women of this class in general, withdrawn from politics and political intrigue, were domestic and amiable; many wives, who had not formerly been considered as patterns of conjugal affection, having made great sacrifices and exertions for their husbands and families during the trials of adversity, became attached to them to a degree, of which they had not perhaps known themselves to be capable, during their youthful days of folly and dissipation.

With regard to literature he observed, that it had considerably degenerated. For the good taste, wit, and polished style, which had characterized French literature before the Revolution, there was no longer any demand, and but few competent judges remained. The talents of the nation had been forced by circumstances into different directions. At one time, the hurry and necessity of the passing moment had produced political pamphlets, and slight works of amusement, formed to catch the public revolutionary taste. At another period, the crossing parties, and

the real want of freedom in the country, had repressed literary efforts. Science, which flourished independently of politics, and which was often useful and essential to the rulers, had meanwhile been encouraged, and had prospered. The discoveries and inventions of men of science shewed, that the same positive quantity of talent existed in France as in former times, though appearing in a new form.

The system of *espionnage* in Paris at this period could not but strike every true Englishman with disgust and indignation. My father could scarcely be brought to believe in its existence, till he had well-attested facts produced to him, and till he perceived the suspicion, and excessive caution and constraint, which the system spread over general society. He never meddled in politics; and was, for his own sake, and for the sake of his friends, so prudent in conversation, and in the acquaintance he formed, that he had no apprehensions of attracting the censures of the police. Nevertheless, he was one morning surprised by an order to quit Paris in twenty-four hours, and the French territories in fifteen days. A letter of his own, written at the moment, gives a more lively description than I could of this slight affair.

TO MRS. CHARLOTTE SNEYD.

" MY DEAR C. SNEYD, *Paris, Jan.* 27, 1803.

" The only thin sheet of paper in the house had the words ' My dear Sneyd ' written at the top—by squeezing in a C. I make it serve for the beginning of a letter to you, my dear friend, to whom I have wished to write every day for this last week, without finding it possible; for in truth this has been an eventful week; and though the events of every week of my life, with my good will, should be detailed to you, with the utmost exactness, yet, during the moment that they pass, it is sometimes absolutely impossible,

to write them down in order of battle; so that I often find myself passing over things that appeared worth relating, to come immediately to later circumstances, that fill my mind when I sit down to write to you.

"I had been lying in bed later than usual, to dissipate a cold, which had hung upon me for some time, and having just taken another *reef* of the blanket to keep my back warm, I heard a strange voice talking to Fanny in the next room; she came in and told me, that an officer of the police must speak to me instantly. I desired he might walk in; he appeared in his blue uniform, embroidered with green, and presented a warrant, which, as he informed me (in a manner sufficiently peremptory) required my immediate attendance. My being ill was not a sufficient excuse; I got up, and dressed myself *slowly*, to gain time for thinking—drank one dish of chocolate, ordered my carriage, and went with my *exempt* to the Palais de Justice. There I was shewn into a parlour, or rather a guard-room, where a man like an under-officer was sitting at a desk. In a few minutes I was desired to walk up stairs into a long narrow room, in different parts of which ten or twelve clerks were sitting at different tables. To one of these I was directed—he asked my name, wrote it on a printed card, and, demanding half a crown, presented the card to me, telling me it was a passport. I told him I did not want a passport; but he pressed it upon me, assuring me, that I had urgent necessity for it, as I must quit Paris immediately. Then he pointed out to me another table, where another clerk was pleased to place me in the most advantageous point of view for taking my portrait, and he took my written portrait with great solemnity, and this he copied into my passport. I begged to know who was the principal person in the room, and to him I applied to learn the cause of the whole proceeding. He coolly answered, that if I wanted to know, I must apply to the *Grand Juge*. To the Grand Juge I drove, and after having waited till the number 93 was called, the number of the ticket which had been given to me at the door, I was admitted, and the Grand Juge most formally assured me, that he knew nothing of the affair, *but* that all I had to do was to obey. I returned home, and on examining my passport, found that I was ordered to quit Paris in twenty-four hours. I went directly to our ambassador, Lord Whitworth, who lived at the extremity of the town: he was ill—with difficulty I got at his secretary, Mr. Talbot, to whom I pointed out, that I applied to my ambassador from a sense of duty and politeness, before I would

make any application to private friends, though I believed, that I had many in Paris, who were willing and able to assist me. The secretary went to the ambassador, and in half an hour wrote an official note to Talleyrand, to ask the why and the wherefore. He advised me in the mean time to quit Paris, and to go to some village near it—Passy or Versailles. Passy seemed preferable, because it is the nearest to Paris—only a mile and a half distant. Before I quitted Paris, I made another attempt to obtain some explanation from the Grand Juge. I could not see him or even his secretary, for a considerable time; and when at length the secretary appeared, it was only to tell me, that I could not see the Grand Juge. 'Cannot I write,' said I, 'to your Grand Juge?' He answered hesitatingly—'Yes.' A huissier took in my note, and another excellent one from the friend who was with me—F. D. The huissier returned presently, holding my papers out to me at arm's length—'the Grand Juge knows nothing of the matter.'

I returned home, dined—ordered a carriage to be ready to take me to Passy—wrote a letter to Buonaparte, stating my entire ignorance of the cause of my *déportation*, and asserting that I was unconnected with any political party. F. D. engaged, that the letter should be delivered; and Mrs. E. and Charlotte remaining to settle our affairs at Paris, I set off for Passy with Maria, where my friend F. D. had taken the best lodging he could find for me in the village. Madame G. had offered me her country house at Passy; but though she pressed that offer most kindly, we would not accept of it, lest we should compromise our friends. Another friend, Mons. de P., offered his country house, but for the same reason this offer was declined. We arrived at Passy about ten o'clock at night, and though a déporté, I slept tolerably well. Before I was up, my friend Mons. de P. was with me—breakfasted with us in our little oven of a parlour—conversed two hours most agreeably. Our other friend, F. D., came also before we had breakfasted—and just as I had mounted on a table, to paste some paper over certain deficiencies in the window, enter M. P—— and Le B * * * * n.

" 'Mon ami, ce n'est pas la peine!' cried they, both at once, their faces *rayonnant de joie*. 'You need not give yourself so much trouble—you will not stay here long. We have seen the Grand Juge, and your detention arises from a mistake. It was supposed, that you are brother to the Abbé Edgeworth—we are to deliver a petition from you, stating what your relationship to the Abbé really is. This shall be backed by an address

signed by all your friends at Paris, and you will be then at liberty to return.'

" I objected to writing any petition, and at all events I determined to consult my ambassador, who had conducted himself well towards me. I wrote to Lord Whitworth, stating the facts, and declaring, that nothing could ever make me deny the honor of being related to the Abbé E. Lord Whitworth advised me, however, to state the fact, that I was not the Abbé's brother."

P * * * * * and Le B * * * * * drew up a memorial in my father's favor, and presented it to the Grand Juge at a public audience. His reply was a question — " Is not this Englishman brother to the Abbé E.?"—Pretending to be satisfied when he was apprised of the contrary, he said, that the affair was all a mistake, and that the gentleman might return to Paris. No direct answer was received from the first Consul; but perhaps the revocation of the order of the Grand Juge came from him. We were assured, that my father's letter had been read by him, and that he declared he knew nothing of the affair; and, so far from objecting to any man for being related to the Abbé Edgeworth, he declared, that he considered him as a most respectable, faithful subject, and that he wished he had many such. In the same spirit, and with the same expressions, he had about this time given a place to the only surviving counsellor of Lewis the XVIth, who had defended the King on his trial.

In the evening of the second day of my father's *banishment* from Paris, our friends informing Mrs. Edgeworth of the permission granted him to return, she came to Passy for us at seven o'clock in the evening. Late as it was, when he got to Paris, he stopped at the English ambassador's hotel, to tell him the result of the business.

At a public court dinner, at which Regnier, the Grand Juge, was present, some days after this affair, one of our friends spoke of it, and questioned him as to his *real* reasons. He declared he had none; but excused himself by saying, that Paris was too full of strangers, and that he had general orders, to clear it of *la lie du peuple étranger;* to which our friend replied, that "M. le Grand Juge should however distinguish between *la lie* and *l'élite du peuple.*"

By every playful and every serious expression of kindness, our friends endeavoured to efface from our minds any disagreeable recollection of what had happened. As to personal inconvenience or transient anxiety, occasioned by an eight and forty hours banishment, it was infinitely overbalanced to my father, by the means it afforded him of seeing the real regard felt for him by those, whom he most esteemed in France. It gave us also an opportunity of seeing the character of the French in the most amiable point of view, and confirmed his former belief in the steadiness and substantial nature of their friendships.

The memorial, which our Parisian friends drew up, to present to the Grand Juge, stated, "that my father was a man of letters, that we were authors of a work on education, well known in France — that he had lived, ever since he came to Paris, with literary society, totally unconnected with politics." Some kind and highly gratifying expressions were added: several celebrated names of the highest respectability were subscribed. After the business was over, the memorial was put into my father's hand, and has been, and will be carefully preserved by his family, as a testimony of the steadiness of our Parisian

friends. It should be observed, that all this happened just after the explosion of what was called *the infernal machine*, when Buonaparte had been put in fear of his life, and when he was peculiarly suspicious of foreigners, and jealous in an extraordinary degree of the English, and of all who liked or frequented their society. Our friends were well aware of the *disagreeable* consequences to themselves, that might have ensued from exciting his displeasure. At the moment when they offered their country-houses, and their active assistance and support, they did not know, that the whole affair originated with the Grand Juge; they had, on the contrary, reason to believe, that it came from Buonaparte himself. Therefore there was the more hazard and merit in their kindness.

As the spring was advancing, my father was pressed by his friends to prolong his stay; they assured us, that a summer at Paris is more delightful, than can be imagined by any, who have not experienced its charms. The society there pleased him so much, he saw so many means of instruction and amusement for his children, and of improvement for the grown and growing up part of his family, that before this affair occurred, he had more than half resolved to send to Ireland for them, and to take a house at Paris for two years. Previously to his being ordered to leave Paris, he was in treaty for a house formerly belonging to Garat, in a charming situation, near les Jardins du Luxembourg. But, notwithstanding the proofs of disinterested and steady attachment, which he had received from his friends, and notwithstanding all the allurements of Parisian society; an Englishman, with British feeling and the

spirit of liberty within him, could not, after all that had passed, desire to reside under a government, where he might, innocent of all offence, be seized by a petty officer of police, and without examination, trial, or reason given, be ordered to quit the capital in four and twenty hours. He was no longer tempted by Garat's house in the Luxembourg gardens. He was prudent, decided, and prompt—had he been otherwise, we might all have been among the number of our countrymen, who were, contrary to the law of nations, and to justice and reason, made prisoners in France at the breaking out of the war. We were fortunate in getting safe to free and happy England a short time before war was declared, and before the detention of the English took place.

My eldest brother had the misfortune, to be among those who were detained. His exile was rendered as tolerable as circumstances would permit, by the indefatigable kindness of our friends the D'*******s. But it was an exile of eleven years — from 1803 to 1814 — six years of that time spent at Verdun!

CHAPTER XII.

On our return to England, we heard such an account of the declining health of my brother Henry, who was then at Edinburgh, as determined my father to go immediately to see him, and to bring him home with us to the milder climate of Ireland.

We went to Scotland in the spring of 1803 ; found Henry's health and spirits better than we had expected ; his kind and skilful physician and friend, Dr. Gregory, gave us hopes, that, with care and caution, he might escape threatening consumption. My father was ever ready to hope, and his confidence in the judgment and care of Dr. Gregory were so far justified ; for Henry recovered from this attack, and we flattered ourselves, that by care he might be long preserved. He mended rapidly while we were at Edinburgh ; and this improvement in his health, added to the pleasure my father felt in seeing the interest his son had excited among the friends he had made for himself at Edinburgh — men of the first abilities and highest characters, both in literature and science — whom we knew by their works, as did all the world ; with some of whom my father had had the honor of corresponding, but to whom he was personally unknown. Imagine the pleasure he felt at being introduced to them by his son, and in hearing

Gregory, Alison, Playfair, Dugald Stewart, speak of Henry, as if he actually belonged to themselves, and with the most affectionate regard.

From the time he came to Edinburgh, to the hour he left it, Henry was received at Lothian House, where Mr. and Mrs. D. Stewart then resided, as if he had been one of their own family. There all his holidays, all the hours that could be spared from study, were delightfully spent; and there, in health and in sickness, he received all the counsel and sympathy, and all the tender care, which the best of parents could have bestowed. As one of those friends said to me,—"this pure and innocent being was, while in Edinburgh, watched over with constant and unwearied affection."

May I? Yes—I *must* be permitted to name Mrs. Dugald Stewart, for whom he always felt the gratitude of the most affectionate son to the kindest of mothers. To her maternal care, and to Mrs. Alison's, we owe it, that Henry got through two severe seasons in Scotland, and that a few years longer of his life were preserved.

We spent some weeks with him, and among his friends at Edinburgh, in delightful society. The evening parties at Lothian House appeared to us (then fresh from Paris) the most happy mixture of men of letters, of men of science, and of people of the world, that we had ever seen. And here, while we enjoyed the powerful display of talents, and the pleasures and profits of conversation, we felt a sense of security and satisfaction, from knowing, that beyond and above these there existed British liberty, and domestic virtue and happiness.

We left Edinburgh with sentiments of public admiration and private gratitude, regretting, that we must quit such society, and part from such friends. Dr. Gregory advised, that no delay should be made in removing my brother Henry, who was now equal to the journey, to a milder climate. He went to Madeira some time afterwards, but he was never restored to health. He died at Clifton in 1813.

After our return to Edgeworths-town in 1803, my father was again intent upon an object, in which he had formerly met with disappointments, sufficient to have discouraged the ardor, and disgusted the patriotism of most other men. Ireland was again threatened with a French invasion. Lord Hardwicke was at that time Lord Lieutenant of Ireland; and to him my father renewed his gratuitous offers of establishing a telegraph for the much wanted quick and sure communication of intelligence. Government now thought this a most desirable object, and my father was desired to form a line of communication from Dublin to Galway. Captain Beaufort, R.N., his brother-in-law and friend, not being at that time in active service, engaged to assist in this undertaking, both from private friendship and pure public motives. He would not accept of any remuneration, and devoted to this object two years of his life in unremitting exertion.

A line of telegraphs from Dublin to Galway was completed, temporary guard-houses were built at the requisite stations, and a telegraphic corps was formed from those of my father's yeomanry corps, and others of his tenantry, whom he had judged fit for the purpose. They had some additional

pay, and their expenses of living at different stations were defrayed by government. They conducted themselves invariably well, during the whole time they were employed, and shewed all the steadiness and intelligence, that could be desired. Telegraphic messages and answers from Dublin to Galway were transmitted in the course of eight minutes, in a public experiment for the Lord Lieutenant; and his Excellency's approbation was graciously expressed. Every one seemed perfectly convinced of the utility, and satisfied of the efficiency and success of the establishment. The telegraphs being portable, they could be erected or taken down in a few minutes, and the whole line might thus be removed into any direction, that the will of the commander-in-chief, or the exigency of the moment, should require—two men could, with ease, carry the whole paraphernalia of each station upon their shoulders.

To shew how rapidly the stations might be rendered secure from any sudden attack, and available for other purposes in disturbed parts of the country, my father proposed to fortify one of them, suggesting, that the experiment should be made on the hill of Cappa, the third station from Dublin, and a place where the advantage of having a military post had been sufficiently manifest during the rebellion of 1798. Government empowered him to carry this plan into execution. He obtained possession of a ruined stone windmill on that hill, and at a wonderfully small expense rendered it proof against any species of hostility, except that of cannon, or blockade.

The views of Buonaparte, however, seemed to be directed to other shores. The alarm of invasion gradually subsided, and the telegraphs were consigned to the care of the ordinary military established in the country. My father and his friend being diplomatically thanked for their exertions, the latter returned to the more active pursuits of his profession, and we again rejoiced in the undisturbed peace of the country.

I cannot quit this subject, without expressing what I know were my father's feelings towards the Irish military secretary, Sir Edward Baker Littlehales*, who in all this business shewed the most liberal and enlightened views for Ireland. On every occasion he treated her country gentlemen, and all who had business to transact at the Castle, with that politeness, temper, and uniform propriety, which in his station is equally becoming and conciliating.

My father's domestic happiness about this time had severe shocks. He was doomed to see the fairest blossoms of talent blasted by disease, and the most highly cultivated, and the most valuable fruits of education perish, almost at the moment when they attained to perfection beyond his fondest hopes.

Charlotte, for whom we had never had any apprehensions; and who during our visit to Paris had appeared the image of health, and had been described by foreigners "as fresh as a rose," suddenly faded. Soon after her return from the continent, her health declined; but, as she did not resemble either

* Now Sir E. B. L. Baker.

of her sisters, Honora or Elizabeth, who died of consumption, this difference long gave flattering security.

In the autumn of 1806, however, the symptoms of pulmonary consumption appeared. She died the ensuing spring (April 1807), in her twenty-fourth year.

CHAPTER XIII.

In the spring of 1805, my father visited London again; having been summoned as a witness in the case of his friend Judge Fox, against whom a violent attack had been made: from which the judge returned fully justified and with higher claims than ever to the esteem of his friends. In 1806, under the administration of the Duke of Bedford, who, happily for Ireland, was then its Viceroy, a board of commissioners to inquire into the education of the people of Ireland was appointed by His Grace. My father had claims to the honor of being of this board, as having brought into the last Irish parliament a bill for the better education of the people, as having resided long in Ireland, and as being a person, whose principles of toleration had been manifest in his conduct, and whose zeal for the improvement of education was known by his writings. These claims were felt; and in the most handsome manner, without any direct or indirect application on his part, he was appointed one of the commissioners. They received no salary. Their board lasted from 1806 to 1811. Their meetings were attended regularly, at every

summons, by all the members, who assembled for that purpose in Dublin, though many lived at distant parts of the country. To my father this was frequently inconvenient, but he never missed any one meeting. The Primate was indefatigable in his zeal and patience, and substantial good resulted from the inquiries of the commissioners. Some abuses were detected and reformed, and the public obtained a clear view of the present state of the Charter Schools, and other schools in Ireland, with suggestions for the best means for their improvement. But, above all, the great point gained was the assurance from this commission, composed of many of the dignitaries of the Church, with the highest at their head, that the system of proselytism was abandoned, and that it was their wish to proceed in the most liberal manner towards the Catholics of Ireland in the further improvement of the education of the people.

The Reports of this Board have been published by the House of Commons. In the Appendix there is a paper of my father's, containing a short but comprehensive view of the Charter Schools of Ireland, as they were, and some hints for their improvement; and also a letter addressed to the Primate, the contents of which, the Duke of Bedford observed, formed the foundation of this, the most liberal (the 16th) of all the Reports of the Irish Board of Education.

A private good, to my father, on which he set high value, resulted from the manner in which he conducted himself at this Board. He obtained the approbation, and, during his life ever afterwards,

he enjoyed the esteem and peculiar regard of that excellent Primate of Ireland the Hon. William Stuart, son of Lord Bute.

My father was engaged in the years 1807-8, in various scientific and literary occupations,—further experiments on wheel carriages, &c.,—and in 1809 he began, at the earnest request of one of his sons, to write the narrative of his life, when in the autumn of that year, he was suddenly interrupted by a bilious or nervous fever, which caused us much alarm, and though he seemed to recover from it, his constitution was evidently weakened by it. Scarcely had he even appeared to recover, when he was called to fresh exertions by a new object of public utility, on which his ardent mind became intent.

A Commission to examine into the nature and extent of the bogs of Ireland, and to determine whether they could or could not be reclaimed, was appointed by Parliament. One of the Commissioners, a friend of my father's, was particularly anxious to engage his active assistance; but, after some letters on the subject had passed, he happened to come for a day to Edgeworths-town, and seeing the state to which my father was then reduced by illness, thought that it would be not only dangerous, but impossible for him, especially at his advanced time of life, to undertake such a task, which could not be executed without great bodily fatigue and exposure to wet and variable climate.

My father, however, said he could only die, and that he would rather die doing something, than doing nothing. Besides its being a great national object, he was also interested in this business on

account of one of his sons, who was intended for a civil engineer; and this undertaking would, he thought, afford opportunity of advantageously conducting his son's professional education. After privately remonstrating in vain against some articles in the instructions of the board to their engineers, which he thought would lead to great and needless expense, he accepted the employment, being convinced, that the undertaking, even though it might not be managed in the most economical or best manner possible, would, nevertheless, pay the public by its ultimate utility. He undertook the charge of a district, containing above thirty-four thousand five hundred English acres, which, according to his instructions, were "to be surveyed, levelled, and bored to the hard ground, at lines parallel to each other, at the distance of a quarter of a mile." However he might previously remonstrate as an adviser, from the moment he acted as one under command, no man could obey more scrupulously, or labor more zealously.

In pursuance of the instructions of the Board, which were, to establish means of verifying the maps delivered by their engineers, my brother William laid down a base for a series of triangles for the trigonometrical survey of this district; and with the assistance of his friend Dr. Brinkley (Professor of Astronomy in Ireland), and with an excellent transit instrument of three and a half feet length, he determined a meridian line; he also ascertained the latitude with a repeating circle of eighteen inches diameter, constructed by Troughton.

It was late in the year, and the weather unfavour-

able. In laying out and verifying the work of the surveyors employed, my father was usually out from day-break to sunset,—often fifteen hours without food, traversing on foot, with great bodily exertion, wet and deep bogs, scarcely passable at that season, even by the common Irish best used to them.

In traversing these bogs, a man must pick his way carefully, sometimes wading, sometimes leaping from one landing place to another, chusing these cautiously, lest they should not sustain his weight; avoiding certain treacherous green spots, on which the unwary might be tempted to set foot—and would sink, never to rise again. It may be conceived what fatigue and anxiety must attend these operations to a person unused to them; especially to one in my father's habits of life, and brought up, as the reader may remember he describes himself to have been, too tenderly.

He was now in his 65th year. To our astonishment his health not only endured these exertions, and the hardships to which he exposed himself, but improved under them, and was re-established. This confirmed him in the belief of his favorite doctrine, that the mind can sustain the body. After nearly a twelvemonth's hard work, his part of the undertaking was completed, and his report was given to the Board. It is published among the parliamentary reports for 1810. His general opinion was, that the improvement of the vast tract of bog, which he examined, was not only practicable, but that it would prove highly and quickly profitable to individuals, and advantageous in every point of view to this country, and to Great Britain.

The public reports of the other engineers employed, and the private conversation he had with them, confirmed him in this belief. But he was aware, that his and their opinion, evidence, or reasoning, would not, and ought not, to be sufficient alone to impress this conviction upon the public. Therefore, in his Report, he strongly urged, "that some public experi- "ment should be tried, that might demonstrate to "the nation, either that the scheme of improving "the bogs of Ireland is practicable or hopeless."

The chief obstacles are the want of capital, and the danger of litigation. The want of capital in the immediate proprietors appeared to him of no irremediable consequence; because if once the public mind were satisfied of the safety and advantage of the speculation, English capital would speedily flow to Ireland for this purpose, and large companies would be formed to carry on any undertaking which promised high and secure profit. The danger of litigation he considered as a greater obstacle. Of this he had experience in his own case. He had wished to undertake the improvement of a large tract of bog in his neighbourhood, and for this purpose had desired to purchase it from the proprietor; but the proprietor first told him he had neither the power nor inclination to sell it. Then my father, being very desirous to try a decisive experiment on a large scale, proposed to take the whole tract on a long lease, and offered a rent, till then unheard of for bog land. The proprietor professed himself satisfied with the proposal, provided my father would undertake to indemnify him for any expense, to which he might be put by future lawsuits concerning the boundaries

of this bog; but it was impossible to enter into this insurance, and consequently he could not obtain the bog proposed, or further prosecute his plan.

The same sort of difficulty must frequently recur. Parts of different estates pass through extensive bogs, of which the boundaries are uncertain. The right to cut the turf is usually accorded to the occupiers of adjoining farms; but they are at constant war with each other, and these disputes, involving the original grants of the lands hundreds of years ago, with all subsequent deeds and settlements, appear absolutely interminable.

No hand but that of the legislature, can untie or cut this knot. And whether it could be safely cut through even by that all-powerful hand, remains questionable. It may not be a question at present of much interest to the British public, because no decisive experiment has yet proved the value and attainableness of the object; but its magnitude and importance are uncontestable. The whole extent of the peat soil in Ireland exceeds, as it is confidently pronounced, "Two millions eight hundred and thirty thousand acres*," of which above half, as it is supposed, might be converted to the general purposes of agriculture.

Whenever the public attention shall become intent upon the subject, which must sooner or later happen, these "Reports" will be anxiously consulted; and it will, I trust, be found, that my father's contain, in as few words as possible, many applicable facts,

* Fourth and last Report of the Commissioners on Bogs in Ireland.

some accurate experiments, some improvements on machinery now in use, and some new and ingenious mechanical contrivances.

In the year 1811, he was occupied in constructing, upon a plan of his own invention, a spire for the church of Edgeworths-town. This spire was formed of a skeleton of iron, covered with slates, painted and sanded, to resemble Portland stone. It was put together on the ground, within the tower of the church, and when finished, it was to be drawn up at once, with the assistance of counterbalancing weights, to the top of the tower, and there to be fixed in its place.

The novelty of the construction of this spire, even in this its first skeleton state, excited attention; and as it drew towards its completion, and near the moment when, with its covering of slates, altogether amounting to many tons weight, it was to move, or not to move, fifty feet from the ground to the top of the tower, every body in the neighbourhood, forming different opinions of the probability of its success or failure, became interested in the event.

Several friends and acquaintance, in our own and from adjoining counties, came to see it drawn up. Fortunately it happened to be a very fine autumnal day — and the groups of spectators of different ranks and ages, assembled and waiting in silent expectation, gave a picturesque effect to the whole. A bugle sounded, as the signal for ascent. The top of the spire, appearing through the tower of the church, began to move upwards: its gilt ball and arrow glittered in the sun, while with motion that was scarcely perceptible it rose majestically. Not a word nor interjection was uttered by any even

of the men, who worked the windlasses at the top of the tower.

It reached its destined station in eighteen minutes, and then a flag streamed from its summit, and gave notice, that all was safe. Not the slightest accident or difficulty occurred. The conduct of the whole had been trusted to my brother William, (the civil engineer); and the first words my father said, when he was congratulated upon the success of the work, were, that his son's steadiness gave him infinitely more satisfaction, than he could feel from the success of any invention of his own.

The spire was well secured, and provided with a conductor before we left the place. This proved a wise precaution, for that very evening the weather changing suddenly, a storm of wind, thunder, and lightning lasted during the night. In the morning the first thing of which we thought, the first point to which we looked, was the spire; but my father had not been anxious, and experience has hitherto justified his confidence; in thirty-two years since its erection no change has been perceptible in the perpendicularity of this spire. Though the slightest alteration would have been detected, as by a singular coincidence, the spindle of the weathercock was precisely in the plane of a vertical wire of the transit instrument, in the observatory in our house.

An account of its construction, and of the simple machinery employed in raising it, may be found in Nicholson's Journal, vol. xxx. 1811.*

Towards the close of this year, 1811, Sir John

* In the same Journal, vol. xxxi. 1812, is another paper relative to the same subject.

Sinclair applied to my father, by the desire of the Committee of the House of Commons, as he understood, requesting that he would look over and give a report upon a mass of papers, containing the evidence and opinions of all who had been examined by what had been technically called the *Committee of Broad Wheels*. The chief object was to determine, whether cylindrical or conical wheels are most advantageous, and to decide which are least destructive to the roads. To arrange, analyse, and report on all the heterogeneous evidence and opinions of carters, waggoners, coachmen, practical mechanics, and mechanic philosophers, from the civil engineers of the highest reputation, down to the most illiterate English drayman, was a tedious and difficult task. After winnowing the sense from the nonsense, he gave the information compressed into the smallest compass. In the form of an alphabetical index, a *catalogue raisonné* was made, presenting the result and value of the evidence of each person, who had been examined.

When this was effected, and when he had prepared a report to be laid before the House of Commons, it was explained to him, that Sir John Sinclair had not been empowered to make his application by the Committee, of which he had been chairman. It was a private request of his own, and Sir John now expressed a wish, to have the report for the Board of Agriculture. With this request my father declined to comply; but to shew his respect for the members of that Board, and his willingness to contribute towards their useful and patriotic purposes, he wrote and presented to them "*An Essay on Springs applied to Carts.*"

He reserved for future publication what he had prepared as a report, resolving to add to it, from time to time, at his leisure, whatever further knowledge fresh observation and experiment might furnish. The Board of Agriculture did him the honor to vote him their thanks, and a hundred guineas to be presented to him in the form of a piece of plate, or in any other form he might wish ; but this he declined accepting, at the same time expressing a wish, that if it should suit the views of the Society, the money might in future be applied towards defraying the expense of some public experiments on this subject.

Some time afterwards, when he was in London, he pursued this idea, and endeavoured to have a course of experiments tried on a large scale, to determine the draught of different carriages. The Duke of Bedford, to whom he had been known, when his Grace was Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, offered his assistance, with all the means of accommodation and publicity, which Woburn could so amply afford. But unfortunately some private affairs just at that moment occurred, which called my father away from London, and deprived him of the possibility of availing himself of these advantages. It was a disappointment, which he then and afterwards strongly lamented. He ever retained a grateful sense of the peculiar politeness shewn to him on this occasion by the Duke of Bedford, and felt true esteem for the patriotic spirit and zeal so worthy of a British nobleman, which his Grace has always shewn, to promote the interests of science, and to urge objects of national utility.

In my father's "*Essay on Roads and Wheel Carriages*," he gave to the public all the information which he had collected, all the facts ascertained,

and has pointed out the means, by which experiments on a large scale might be satisfactorily tried, to decide practically the theoretic points yet remaining in dispute.

Connected with this essay, were "*Experiments on the use of Springs applied to Carriages.*" So early as the year 1788, he had published a memoir on this subject in the Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy.

Since the time of Dr. Hooke (in Charles the Second's reign) it had been well understood, that springs contribute considerably to the ease and convenience of all who travel in carriages, and to the safety of goods conveyed in them; but no one had discovered, or at least had ever hinted to the public, the great utility of springs, *in easing to the horses the draught of carriages*, till this fact was stated, and proved by experiment by my father in the memoir referred to. It was given with so little ostentation, and in so few words, that it was probably passed over by many without being noticed as a new discovery, or without their comprehending the consequences to which it would lead. By those who call themselves practical men it lay long unheeded as mere theory; by some more wise and more crafty, it had been used, amplified on, and appropriated, without due acknowledgment in any scientific publication. But it happened, that in 1803, on the very day when my father, for the first time, arrived in Edinburgh, Professor Robison was lecturing on this branch of mechanics; and accidentally going to the lecture, he had the satisfaction of hearing his own experiments mentioned in the

most gratifying manner, by one who was so well qualified to judge on this subject.

May I be permitted to remark, how steadily he pursued the same objects of research through the whole of his life? When he was but nineteen, he wrote an essay on wheel carriages in the *Museum Rusticum;* at seventy we find him prosecuting the same inquiries; and those first thoughts, and those ingenious ideas, which had been but the amusement of his early youth, as he advanced in life, he turned to practical purposes, and to large objects of public utility. For instance, that mode of conveying secret and swift intelligence, which he had first suggested, merely to decide a wager between a friend of his and a young nobleman, thirty years afterwards he improved into a national telegraph; and his juvenile amusements with the sailing chariot led to those experiments on the resistance of the air, which in more mature years, pursued in the patient spirit of philosophical investigation, he turned to good account for the real business of life, and for the advancement of science.

In the year 1783 he published in the Transactions of the Royal Society, (vol. 73,) "*An Essay on the Resistance of the Air.*" The object of that essay is to determine the force of the wind upon surfaces of different size and figure, or upon the same surface, when placed in various directions, inclined at different angles, or curved in different arches. These experiments were originally suggested by a singular circumstance, thus mentioned by Robins in his Treatise on Gunnery.

"If two similar cards are placed opposite the

wind, one upon its end, and the other on its side, and both inclined to the horizon at the same angle, the wind will have the greater effect upon the card that is placed endways."

To verify this experiment, and to pursue the inquiry, my father contrived an apparatus of a more accurate construction, upon a larger scale, and less liable to friction, than that which had been used by Mr. Robins. After trying several experiments on surfaces of various shapes, he ascertained the difference of resistance in different cases; suggested the probable cause of these variations; and opened a large field for future curious and useful speculation; *useful* it may be called, as well as curious, because such knowledge applies immediately to the wants and active business of life, to the construction of wind and water-mills, and to the extensive purposes of navigation. The theory of philosophers, and the practice of mechanics and seamen, were, and perhaps are, still at variance as to the manner in which sails of windmills, and of ships, should be set. Dr. Hooke, in his day, expressed his surprise, at the obstinacy of seamen, "in continuing, "after what appeared the clearest demonstration to "the contrary, to prefer what are called bellying or "bunting sails, to such as are hauled tight." The doctor said, that he would, at some future time, add the test of experiment to mathematical investigation in support of his own theory.

It is remarkable, that the test of experiment, when at length it was applied, confirmed the truth of what the philosopher had reprobated as an obstinate vulgar error. My father, in his "*Essay on the Resistance of the Air*," gives the result of his experiments on a flat and curved surface of the same dimensions, and

explains the cause of error, into which Dr. Hooke, M. Parent, and other mathematicians fell in their theoretic reasonings. These subjects of course are all open to further experiment, and require further investigation. In science it is not given to man, *to finish;* to persevere, to advance a step or two, is all that can be accomplished; and all that will be expected by the real philosopher.

"*We will endeavour,*" is the humble and becoming motto of a philosophical society.*

It is tempting to human ingenuity, and still more to vanity, to raise, each man after his own fashion, a little pyramid of human knowledge; but not only will he be more useful to science, but the memory of his labors will be the more likely to endure, who has been content to work humbly along with others, even if he have added but one stone, one morsel of cement, to the great solid edifice.

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* Royal Irish Academy.

CHAPTER XIV.

It has been said, that the best part of an author is always in his books. Upon this principle, the biography of literary men often consists of little more than the history of the books which they have written, the dates of their publication, their different editions and variations, with an account of the quarrels and controversies, that may have occurred with brother authors, and a display of the encomiums of friends, or a repetition of complaints of the injustice of critics. All such tiresome topics the reader of these memoirs has been spared the more readily, because the best part of him, whose life I am writing, was *not* in his works. He undervalued his literary talents so much, that for many years of his life he said, that he could not *write*. In one of his early letters to Mr. Day, the reader may recollect his concluding with "You know I am no writer; my ideas do not, like yours, flow to my pen readily." He found, that the early habit of writing Latin had given a Latin construction to his style; and I have often heard him declare, that he never wrote any thing he could bear to read till he was past forty. He never seemed to be satisfied with his own writing, when he knew it to be his. In general, he so completely forgot what he had written, that we have often cheated him into praising passages which he believed

to have been written by another. Though he had passed much of his youth with some of the most celebrated writers of his age, this did not excite in him any ambition to become an author, he was content with assisting and enjoying the celebrity of his friends.

One little book, however, he and Mrs. Honora Edgeworth wrote, I believe, very early in the year 1778, when she, in teaching her first child to read, found the want of something to follow Mrs. Barbauld's lessons, and felt the difficulty of explaining the language of all the other books for children, which were then in use.

> "Favete linguis ———
> Virginibus puerisque canto,"

was the motto of this little volume, which was the first part of "Harry and Lucy," or of "*Practical Education*," as I find it called in the title page to the few copies which were then printed in large type for the use only of his own children. He intended to have carried on the history of Harry and Lucy, through every stage of childhood; to have diffused, through natural dialogue or interesting story, the first principles of morality, with some of the elements of science and literature, so as to shew parents how these may be taught, without wearying the pupil's attention. Much of this plan has, in different forms, been since executed in various publications, by persons of information and talents, who have of late written for young people; but at the time to which I refer, the design was new, and scarcely any English writer of eminence, except Dr. Watts and Mrs. Barbauld, had condescended to write for children.

Mr. Day, who was much pleased with my father's

plan, offered to assist him, and with this intention began Sandford and Merton, which was first designed for a short story to be inserted in Harry and Lucy. The illness of Mrs. Honora Edgeworth interrupted the progress of that little volume, and after her death, the ideas associated with it were so painful to my father, that he could not recur to it. Meanwhile, Mr. Day wrote on rapidly, and finished and published his delightful book. Often, with pride and pleasure, my father used to say, that the public owed Sandford and Merton to him, since it was he, who first turned his friend's attention to the subject of education, and excited him to write that popular and useful work. As to Harry and Lucy after the first part had remained for above twenty years, printed, but not published, it was at last continued by my father, and given to me for "*Early Lessons.*"

In fact, my father never thought of becoming an author, till he felt sufficient motive, in the wish to encourage and assist me to finish "Practical Education." All his literary ambition then and ever was for me.

After "Practical Education," the next book which we published in partnership was (in 1803) the "Essay on Irish Bulls." The first design of this Essay was his:—under the semblance of attack, he wished to shew the English public the eloquence, wit, and talents of the lower classes of people in Ireland. Working zealously upon the ideas which he suggested, sometimes, what was spoken by him was afterwards written by me; or when I wrote my first thoughts, they were corrected and improved

by him ; so that no book was ever written more completely in partnership. The notes on the Dublin shoe-black's metaphorical language, I recollect, are his.

I have heard him tell that shoe-black's story with all the natural, indescribable Irish tones and gestures, of which written language can give but a faint idea. He excelled in imitating the Irish because he never overstepped the modesty or the *assurance* of nature. He marked exquisitely the happy confidence, the shrewd wit of the people, without condescending to produce effect by caricature. He knew not only their comic talents, but their powers of pathos. In the chapter on wit and eloquence, in Irish Bulls, there is a speech of a poor freeholder to a candidate, who asked for his vote ; this speech was made to my father when he was canvassing the county of Longford. It was repeated to me a few hours afterwards, and I wrote it down instantly, without, I believe, the variation of a word.

In the same chapter there is the complaint of a poor widow against her landlord, and the landlord's reply in his own defence. This passage was quoted, I am told, by Campbell, in one of his celebrated lectures on eloquence. It was supposed by him to have been a fictitious narrative, but, on the contrary, it is an unembellished fact. My father was the magistrate, before whom the widow and her landlord appeared, and the whole was described exactly from the life.

After the "Essay on Bulls," my father did not write any thing for several years, except some elementary books, suggested by feeling the want of them

in his own family. In 1802 he published "Poetry explained for Young People": in 1816, "Readings on Poetry": and at various times, different parts of "Early Lessons." He also explained and illustrated his method of teaching to read, in a small tract, called "A Rational Primer." Nothing but the true desire to be useful could have induced any man of talents, to chuse such inglorious labors; but he thought no labor, however humble, beneath him, if it promised any improvement, even in early education. To the construction of twenty pages of this "Rational Primer" he devoted more time, than it would have cost him to write an octavo volume on another subject.

In the introduction to this primer, a striking fact is asserted relative to the short time in which a child, taught by the method there described, learned to read. I have to add, that further trials upon different children in his own family increased his confidence in the success of his plan. The quickness, with which the pupil may learn, he considered but as an inferior and comparatively unimportant object. His purpose was, to prevent children's associating with their first ideas of literature the painful feelings of overstrained or disappointed attention; and it was in this point of view chiefly, that he considered his mode of teaching to read as of material consequence. His principle of always giving distinct marks for each different sound of the vowels has been since brought into more general use. It forms the foundation of Pestalozzi's plan of teaching to read. But one of the most useful of the marks in the "Rational Primer," the mark of obliteration, designed to shew what letters are to be omitted in pronouncing words, has not, I

believe, been adopted by any public instructor. As to the method in general, more time than has yet elapsed must put it to the only sufficient trial, to that of experience, before we can decide on its expediency.

With respect to his other elementary books, "Readings on Poetry," &c., and what he wrote of "Early Lessons," I have only to say, that children and parents have given him the satisfaction, which he most desired—the pleasure of knowing, that these books have answered the purpose, for which they were intended.

In 1808 he published "Professional Education." The best criticism and analysis that I have seen of this book, and also of his general principles of Education, are in Rees's Encyclopedia, in the article, "Moral and Intellectual Education."

Compared with his powers of mind, my father wrote but little, but I may be permitted to say, how much as a critic he did for me. Yet, indeed, this is out of my power, fully to state to the public—only that small circle of our friends, who saw the manuscripts before and after they were corrected by him, can know or imagine how much they were improved by his critical taste and judgment.

Whenever I thought of writing any thing, I told him my first rough plans; and always with the instinct of a good critic, he used to fix immediately upon that, which would best answer the purpose.—"*Sketch that, and shew it to me.*"—These words, from the experience of his sagacity, never failed to inspire me with hope of success. It was then sketched. Sometimes, when I was fond of a par-

ticular part, I used to dilate on it in the sketch; but to this he always objected—"I don't want any of your painting—none of your drapery!—I can imagine all that—let me see the bare skeleton."

It seemed to me sometimes impossible, that he could understand the very slight sketches I made; when, before I was conscious that I had expressed this doubt in my countenance, he always saw it.

"Now my dear little daughter, I know, does not believe, that I understand her."—Then he would in his own words fill up my sketch, paint the description, or represent the character intended, with such life, that I was quite convinced he not only seized the ideas, but that he saw, with the prophetic eye of taste, the utmost that could be made of them. After a sketch had his approbation, he would not see the filling it up, till it had been worked upon for a week or fortnight, or till the first thirty or forty pages were written; then they were read to him, and if he thought them going on tolerably well, the pleasure in his eyes, the approving sound of his voice, even without the praise he so warmly bestowed, were sufficient and delightful excitements to "go on and finish." When he thought that there was spirit in what was written, but that it required, as it often did, great correction, he would say, "Leave that to me: it is my business to *cut* and correct—yours to write on." His skill in *cutting*—his decision in criticism was peculiarly useful to me. His ready invention and infinite resource, when I had run myself into difficulties or absurdities, never failed to extricate me at my utmost need. It was the happy experience of this, and my consequent reliance on his ability,

decision, and truth, that relieved me from the vacillation and anxiety to which I was much subject. He enjoined me to finish whatever I began, and such was his power over my mind, that during his life nothing I began to write was left unfinished. In particular instances, where the subject was not happily chosen, it was irksome to go on and complete the task; nor was the labor always paid by literary success. Yet it was not labor in vain; it strengthened my power of perseverance. Nor did it prevent fresh exertion. My father inspired in my mind that degree of hope and confidence, which is essential to the full exertion of the mental powers.

Were it worth while I could point out many hints for invention, furnished to me by the incidents and characters which my father had met with in his youth. One instance I may record, because it leads to the general principle of criticism, that in most cases the attempt to join truth and fiction does not succeed. The story of Virginia and Clarence Hervey in Belinda, was suggested by the fact of Mr. Day's having educated Sabrina for his wife. This circumstance was however objected to by readers and critics as improbable or impossible. For this, as my father shewed me, there are good and sufficient reasons. In the first place, anxiety to avoid drawing the *characters* from real life, that might be blameable or ridiculous, led me to apply whatever *circumstances* were taken from reality to characters quite different from those to whom the facts had occurred, consequently when so applied, they were unsuitable, and seemed improbable.

Besides, as my father remarked, the facts which strike the attention because they are out of the common course of events, are for this very reason unfit for the moral purposes as well as for the dramatic effect of fiction. The interest we take in hearing an uncommon fact must depend on our belief in its truth. Introduce it into fiction, and this interest ceases; the reader stops to question the probability of the narrative, the illusion and the dramatic effect are at once destroyed; and as to the moral, no safe conclusion for conduct can be drawn, from any circumstances which have not frequently happened, and which are not likely often to recur. In proportion as events are extraordinary, they are unsafe and useless as foundations for prudential reasoning. The writer is reduced to the difficulty of omitting the evidence on which the belief of reality exists, or of introducing what is incongruous, out of proportion to the rest of the story, delaying its progress, or destructive of its unity. But without entering further into theory, most literary manufacturers practically know how dangerous it is to put a patch of truth into a work of fiction. The truth is too strong for the fiction, and on all sides pulls it asunder.

My father's knowledge of the world, and all that he had had opportunities of seeing behind the scenes in the drama of life, was, independently of particular anecdotes, of inestimable service to me. What I could not otherwise have known was thus supplied to me in the best possible manner. Few female authors, perhaps none, have ever enjoyed such advantages in a critic, friend, and father united. Few

have been blessed with, in their own family, such able assistance, such powerful motive, such constant sympathy.

My father never carried on what is called a regular correspondence. He wrote even to his most intimate friends only when prompted by some immediate subject, either of business or affection. His most regular correspondence was with the late excellent Joseph Johnson his bookseller—the man of whom the poet Cowper speaks so frequently in his letters with strong regard, and with expressions of just esteem. All, who have ever had any connexion with him, think of him, I believe, in the same manner. I can answer for my father's having had the highest opinion of his professional integrity, of his humane, liberal, benevolent character, and of his amiable temper.

He considered Mr. Johnson quite as a friend. Indeed he had reason to do so. It is difficult, without hurting the feelings, or in some way compromising the characters of others, to bring before the public examples in support of these assertions; but, suppressing names and dates, one fact I may mention.

A manuscript, written by a celebrated person, and containing the life of one still more interesting to the public, was offered to Mr. Johnson. He knew, that it was likely to be a popular work, and, on the terms on which it was offered, it would have been to him a very advantageous speculation: but, it contained some abuse of my father (of what nature I do not know). Mr. Johnson returned the manuscript, refusing to have any thing to do with it, unless these passages were struck out. The invective was conse-

quently obliterated, and some flattery substituted. Not till a length of time afterwards did the secret transpire to one of our friends, who, knowing it would give my father pleasure to hear of our bookseller's handsome conduct, communicated it to us.

Some years afterwards we received from one of Johnson's nephews the following account of the death of this valuable man, and of another liberal act in our favour, literally in his last moments.

" DEAR SIR, *London*, 21*st December*, 1809.

" I am sorry it falls to my lot, to communicate to you the melancholy and sudden change, which has taken place in our family. My ever to be lamented uncle, Mr. Johnson, terminated his honourable life yesterday afternoon, about four o'clock. His illness was short, for, on Sunday morning, he was as well as usual; since which time, an inflammation in the lungs took place, and baffled all the exertions of his medical attendants. A short time before he died, he dictated the following words, and soon after expired.

" ' My uncle is so afflicted with the spasms and asthma, that he has desired me to write to you, to say, that he should ill deserve your confidence, if he were rigidly to adhere to the contract, which he made for the last work; the sale of which has enabled him, to double the original purchase money, and to place the sum to the credit of your account.'

" I remain,

With the greatest respect,

Your most obedient servant,

JOHN MILES."

Mr. Miles was alone with Mr. Johnson when this was dictated. What Johnson so generously ordered was immediately paid by his executors in the most handsome manner, and with an alacrity, which shewed that his representatives felt pleasure in maintaining his character for liberality.

Some time after Johnson's death, an engraved portrait of him was published, of which his nephews

sent us a copy. My father wrote under the print the following lines.

" Wretches there are, their lucky stars who bless
Whene'er they find a Genius in distress:
Who starve the Bard, and stunt his growing fame,
Lest they should pay the value for his name.
But JOHNSON raised the drooping Bard from earth,
And fostered rising Genius from its birth:
His liberal spirit a *profession* made
Of what with vulgar souls, is vulgar *trade*.

R. L. E."

Two years after Mr. Johnson's death, we had opportunities of seeing more of the liberal character of his successors, in their conduct to a very deserving person, whom we introduced to them, Mrs. Leadbeater, author of " *Cottage Dialogues*" She trusted entirely to them, and had ample reason to be satisfied. My father, who was as much pleased as she could be, wrote, warm at the moment, the following note.

" MY DEAR GENTLEMEN,

" I have just heard your letter to Mrs. Leadbeater read, by one who dropped tears of pleasure, from a sense of your generous and handsome conduct. I take great pleasure in speaking of you to the rest of the world, as you deserve; and I cannot refrain from expressing to yourselves the genuine esteem, that I feel for you. I know, that this direct praise is scarcely allowable, but my advanced age, and my close connexion with you, must be my excuse.

" Yours, sincerely,

" *Edgeworth-Town, May the* 31st, 1811. R. L. E."

" *My* 68*th Birth-day.*"

This warm-hearted note is characteristic of my father more than most of his letters. In general they give no notion of his manner of speaking, therefore I do not regret that I have so few of them to lay before the public: his style in writing

and speaking was more different than can well be conceived, by those who did not personally know him. The character of his writing, if I mistake not, is sober good sense, but his conversation was, as all who heard it felt, full of the enthusiasm of genius, and the energy of benevolence. Young persons delighted in it especially; to them his manner was peculiarly winning, encouraging, inspiring, and permanent in its effect.

Many have gratified me by the assurance that they owed to him their first hopes of themselves, their resolution to improve, and a happy change in the colour and fortune of their lives. In fact in many instances, the strong ambition he inspired, to deserve his approbation and esteem, became a permanent, governing motive in the minds of persons even unconnected with him, or with his family.

CHAPTER XV.

In 1813 my father went to England for the last time in his life. Mrs. Edgeworth and I accompanied him, and spent *the season* of that year in London. He had the happiness of renewing old friendships, and the pleasure of becoming acquainted with almost all the persons of the present day most distinguished for worth and talents. Parents of all ranks were anxious to obtain from him his opinion of their children, and his counsels on education.

They would not allow him to consider himself as a stranger. They spoke to him with grateful frankness, as to a person long known and loved by their families. After we had enjoyed this delightfully cordial gratifying reception, and seen the London panorama of society, and admired all the several bright stars and constellations, we returned satisfied to our retired home.

In former times it had been with painful feelings, that my father had, on his return from England to Ireland, remarked the wide extremes—the shocking contrast between the affluence and poverty, the happiness and misery, of the two countries. But now, this contrast was less striking, though the difference was still great, yet it was diminished and diminishing; a spirit of improvement had arisen. That "sordid content," which he

had deplored as the bane of industry, that despairing indolence, that recklessness of the future, which formerly characterised the lower classes of the people, have, within the last thirty or forty years, considerably diminished; hope, industry, laudable ambition, habits of forecast and providence, have appeared. At the time to which I now allude, that is just before the peace (in 1814), this was strikingly apparent in the increase of the comforts, as well as the necessaries of life, among the poor. Speaking without exaggeration, I may say, that increasing *attempts* towards order and neatness in their dwellings, apparel, and mode of living, became in this part of Ireland every where visible.

Assertions are not so satisfactory as particular facts; and yet even the statement of facts leads sometimes to misconception, from the propensity of the English public to believe, that what is true of a part of Ireland is true of the whole; while on the other hand, it is not always possible, to enter into sufficient detail, to give information without fatiguing the fastidious taste of high-bred impatient benevolence. With all possible, or with all convenient brevity, I will state the improvements we observed in our own county and neighbourhood, and say what I think is attributable to the residence and influence of landed proprietors. Several gentlemen in the county of Longford having become resident, contributed in various ways to this end; some had beautified the face of the country with extensive plantations, and the taste for planting had been raised among the middle class of farmers, and among even the smallest occupiers of land. Hedge rows appeared, and corners of fields well stocked with trees, tolerably fenced;

and the tenant's right in all he planted being secured by the Irish registry act, the planting had been carried on with the activity which security of possession unfailingly creates. My father had but little share in promoting improvement in planting, except by supplying of course his own tenantry with young trees, and by the confidence they had in him, that even if they neglected to register they should enjoy the full value of every twig they planted. He regretted that he had not early begun to plant his estate, and he desired to note this oversight for the sake of those who were to come after him. He had better reason to be satisfied with himself in other respects.

The exertions he made from the time he settled at Edgeworth-Town in 1782, in building comfortable dwellings for some, and in assisting others to build the same for themselves;—his never following the vile system of making forty shilling freeholders, merely for electioneering purposes—the reasonable rent and tenure at which he let his land—the unusual time which he allowed his tenants to *make* their rent —his freeing them from *duty work*—his avoiding as much as possible, in his leases, oppressive or restrictive clauses—his respecting the *tenant's right*, wherever tenants had improved—his encouraging them by the certainty of justice and kindness—his discouraging all expectation of partial favor or *protection*, if they transgressed the laws, or if they lived in indolence and inebriety; succeeded altogether beyond his most sanguine hopes, in meliorating the condition of the people. Especially within the last twenty years, his tenantry, and the whole face of his estate, strikingly improved not only in appearance, but in reality. The poorest class of his tenants, who

in former times lived in smoke and dirt, in too pitiable a condition for description, have now to most of their cabins chimneys and windows, comfortable thatch, and good earthen floors. The dunghills no longer stop up the windows, nor is "the first step out of the cabin into the dirt." The number of slated houses and boarded floors has much encreased; and what is of more consequence, and of better promise, for the future permanence of good habits, and for the progress of improvement, much of what has been done has been effected, not by the landlord, but by the tenants. Even some of the poorest have exerted themselves, to make small additions and improvements in their habitations. No matter how small, my father always, from the first dawning of hope, hailed the appearance of these efforts with due encouragement and assistance; and this, more than any pecuniary donations, tended to increase the disposition to exertion. Even from the first mending of a gap, or the digging a rough cabbage-garden, the planting a hedge, or the building a rude wall, he had hopes; and in these he was not disappointed.

It may be proper to mention, for those who see things more in a prudential or monetary, than either in a sentimental or patriotic point of view, that his pecuniary interests did not ultimately suffer for any temporary sacrifices or forbearance, which he had shewn towards his tenants. On the contrary, his land very considerably increased in value, from the effect of better cultivation; and this was proportionably felt in his income at the close of leases, when the land reverted to him. In other cases, when the times altered at the peace, when the change of prices

and the fall in demand ruined many, both tenants and landlords—and when the distress in this country was so great, that rents could not be obtained—his, with few exceptions, and with moderate allowance, were regularly paid.

As he advanced in years, my father had the very great satisfaction of seeing himself surrounded by a respectable, independent, attached, grateful tenantry. He endeavoured to be of use, not only to his tenantry, but to all within his influence as a country gentleman; not merely by relieving the wants of the poor, but by protecting them as a magistrate from injustice and oppression, by instructing them as to their real interests, showing them the consequences of their bad habits, and exciting and encouraging them by approbation and assistance to improve. In this point of view his residence in Ireland succeeded beyond his hopes. In the course of twenty years a considerable number of human beings had been trained in the way they should go, and others, timely advised, have been saved from guilt and destruction. Reclaimed from the effects of ignorance and bad example, or raised from the indolence of despair, they have become good subjects, and useful members of society. In various lines of humble life, he educated and forwarded in the world many excellent servants, workmen, and tradespeople; and in classes much above these, several young persons, sons of tenants, who looked up to him for protection and advice, and whose early habits and principles he happily influenced, have advanced in different professions, and have succeeded in situations beyond his or their most sanguine expectations. He took

pleasure and pride in counting the numbers of those, who from our remote little village have gone out into the world, and have made their way in foreign countries. Letters from many of these from France, Spain, America, from the East and West Indies—news of their success, evidence of their good conduct, and tokens of their affection and gratitude—have often, in his latter years, and to his latest days, gladdened my father's heart.

The residence of well-educated landed proprietors contributed to improve, not only the pecuniary circumstances, prudence, and moral conduct of the lower classes, but refined and elevated the tastes and manners of all the middle and intermediate classes of gentry. In the course of a quarter of a century, even in our own memory and observation, in our own county and neighbourhood the whole style and tone of society altered.—The fashion has passed away of those desperately tiresome, long, formal dinners, which were given two or three times a year by each family in the country to their neighbours, where the company had more than they could eat, and twenty times more than they should drink; where the gentlemen could talk only of claret, horses, or dogs; and the ladies, only of dress or scandal: so that in the long hours, when they were left to their own discretion, after having examined and appraised each other's finery, many an absent neighbour's character was torn to pieces merely for want of something to say or to do in the stupid circle. But now, the dreadful circle is no more; the chairs, which formerly could only take that form, at which the firmest nerves must ever tremble, are

allowed to stand, or turn in any way which may suit the convenience and pleasure of conversation. The gentlemen and ladies are not separated from the time dinner ends, till the midnight hour, when the carriages came to the door to carry off the bodies of the dead; or, till just sense enough being left, to find their way straight to the tea-table, the gentlemen could only swallow a hasty cup of cold coffee or stewed tea, and be carried off by their sleepy wives, happy if the power of reproach were lost in fatigue.

No doubt in all other parts of Ireland where gentry have settled, similar improvements in society have appeared. The residence of great English landed proprietors, wherever it has been, must have operated advantageously, by bringing to Ireland, by their intermarriages and wide-spread connexions, numerous visitors, and encreasing the much wanted reciprocal knowledge of each other in both countries. But without extending our view further it is not foreign to our purpose to observe what has actually come within our power of verification.

In our own county and neighbourhood a taste for reading and literary conversation has been universally acquired and diffused. Literature has become, as my father long ago prophesied that it would, fashionable, indeed it is now really necessary to all who would appear to advantage, even in the society of country neighbours. A new generation of well-informed young people has grown up, some educated in England, some in Ireland; while those of former days have been obliged to change their tone of real or affected contempt for *reading people*. They have been compelled, either to cultivate themselves in haste

to keep pace with their neighbours, or to assume at least the appearance of understanding, and of liking that, which has become the mode.

About the year 1783, or 4, my father having been present in the only large bookseller's shop in Dublin, when a cargo of new books from London arrived, and among them the Reviews, I should say Review, for there was only one then sufficiently in circulation to make its way to Ireland,—The Monthly Review,—of this, he, on inquiry, found that not above a dozen or twenty at the utmost were ordered in this island. I am informed that now more than two thousand are taken regularly. This may give some measure of the general increase of our taste for literature. The Edinburgh or Quarterly Reviews are now to be found in the houses of most of our principal farmers; and the positive comparative merits or demerits of Campbell, Byron, or Scott, are now as common table and tea-table talk here as in any part of the United Empire. The distinction, which about half a century ago was very strongly marked, between the manners and mental cultivation of a few of the highest class of the aristocracy in Ireland, and of all of the secondary rank of gentry, has now, by the diffusion of literature and the general improvement in education, been softened so much as to be effaced in its striking points of contrast. What might be termed the monopoly of information and elegance it is no longer possible to maintain. This may be mortifying in some few instances to pride, but good sense, to say nothing of benevolence or patriotism, will see ample compensation. Even to the few who enjoyed pre-eminence it must have been, if not a "painful

pre-eminence," one attended with many inconveniences and dangers; all the inconveniences of being misunderstood or misrepresented, and all the dangers of jealousy and envy. The pride of being without a rival is dreadfully overbalanced by the misfortune of being without a judge.

CHAPTER XVI.

I FOUND the following fragment among my father's papers. It was written in his seventy-second year, and is addressed to his children :—

" Since Practical Education was written, Providence has blest me with six children by my present wife, in addition to twelve that I had before. I have attended with care to their education, which has been entirely domestic: I have not determined to follow any preconceived system, but have applied the lessons of my previous experience to correct what had been useless or faulty in my former endeavours, to educate the elder part of my family, or to confirm what I had found to be successful. I now write in the seventy-second year of my age, and I think it is a duty owing to my children, to let them know the means, which have been taken to cultivate their understandings, to give them a sense of religion, a profound veneration for the unknown cause of their existence, and a sincere and practical submission to those decrees, which are to us in our present state inscrutable.

" I wish to prove to my children, that pains have been taken, to give them moral habits, generous sentiments, kind tempers, and easy manners. How very far my success may have fallen short of my endeavours, it is not for me to determine. But upon one pleasing circumstance in their education I look with confident pleasure; because they, and they alone, are able to judge of it. All my children, except my youngest, a boy of five years old, are now of an age when they are able to reflect upon what is past; and they must know that they have upon all occasions been treated with perfect sincerity; that no petty artifices, or what are strangely called pious frauds, have ever been practised to encourage or to deter them; and that they have acquired necessarily habits of truth entirely from principle and from example. This legacy then of a

short Manual of Education I leave to my children, in the pleasing hope that it will recall to them my memory with sentiments of regard and kindness; and that they will trust in some degree, in the education of my grandchildren, to the means and precepts which I have collected; appealing to their own retrospection of the effects, which they have had in the formation of their own characters."

This is all that remains of my father's intended legacy! Our feelings of regret are nothing to the public; but it may be of some consequence to those who have been influenced by his works, or who may hereafter look into them, to know what changes were made in his opinions by his latest experience in education. All these are well known to me, and as he expressed to me in his last illness anxiety that they should be made known, I feel it peculiarly my duty to record them.

The first point of consequence on which his opinions were *modified* (be it observed I say *modified*, not changed,) is with regard to the non-intercourse of servants with children.

I should state that in my father's childhood, servants in Ireland were peculiarly bad; and in England, though less vulgar, those he knew were not essentially better. Some circumstances convinced him that servants such as he then knew were the *most horrible* companions *imaginable* for children, and facts in proof came to his knowledge during his acquaintance with Sir Francis Delaval, which deeply impressed his mind with a sense of dreadful danger. Hence the vehemence of his cautions to parents, in the chapter on Servants, in Practical Education,—hence the strictness of the regulations he recommended to all families, and the absolute prohibition in his own of all conversation between children and servants. We have now,

both in Ireland and in England, a more refined, or at least a *finer* race of domestics, but whether they are improved as much in morals as in manners must still be questioned.

During my father's long life he had opportunities of seeing the bad consequences of leaving children to the companionship and influence of servants. Some of the unhappy failures of apparently careful and strict education in the heirs of great families were, he had reason to know, attributable to the influence early obtained over them by servants. Even unintentionally, and where there is no wickedness, only pure folly, they have been found to do irreparable mischief. Ladies' maids, young gentlemen's gentlemen, footmen, grooms and coachmen, often have, as my father observed, more influence than the preceptor or governess; and are in fact, remotely or immediately, the cause of much of the extravagance, vice, and follies of those under whom they seem to serve.

I recollect that Mrs. Barbauld was the first person who, on the first publication of Practical Education, made this unanswerable objection to the chapter on Servants,—that it was impracticable, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred morally and physically impossible. She was ready to allow, as I recollect she said, that in his own family might have been found the happy exception,—and this was true. In educating his first family he had assistants in the relations who lived with him, who made it possible to dispense with much of the usual attendance of servants.

Besides this, (truth to tell) the non-intercourse with servants was not absolute. There was a real phœnix of a housekeeper who was an exception. The children were every day for hours trusted to her

charge, and in her room where they could learn only good. One family having thus in peculiar circumstances found the plan practicable was, as my father acknowledged, no rule.

Mrs. Barbauld was further well prepared to urge against his plan the tendency to foster aristocratic pride and perhaps ingratitude. The one and twenty other good reasons she said could be given, my father spared her. The plea of impracticability is unanswerable. Then his advice must be modified to bring it within the bounds of possibility. As far as possible prevent all unnecessary intercourse between your children and servants.

Avoid all that sort of intercourse which leads to companionship,—but make no absolute prohibitions, no interdict against speaking to servants.

Prohibitions in this case, as in most others, tend to encrease instead of diminishing the danger by creating a desire to break the law, whether from curiosity or the spirit of contradiction.

When children are made happy with their friends above stairs they will not want to go to the lower regions for amusement or indulgence. And if as they grow up they are permitted to become part of the family, and to join in the conversation of their equals and superiors, they will not need the flattery of servants and dependants; and the taste for good company, meaning persons of superior attainments and noble qualities, will effectually supersede the love of vulgar companions.

The next chapter in Practical Education, in which my father desired to abolish some restrictions, was that *on Acquaintance*. It is impossible to exclude from the sight, hearing, and *imagination* of children,

every thing that is wrong; the seclusion necessary for the attempt would be not only difficult, but dangerous, as it would leave young people in ignorance of the world in which they are to live, and would deprive them of the means of forming their judgment on moral subjects.

On the contrary, if free intercourse be allowed with various persons, they learn to judge of character, and from acquaintance to select friends. In private education this freedom of intercourse is particularly necessary, as it is the only way in which the advantage of early experience in large public schools can be supplied.

In the course of my father's long life, after seeing the result of much careful and much careless public and private education, he was convinced that it is vain to make nice calculations as to the effect of peculiar methods of moral or of intellectual training; he perceived that by different modes and by various paths we may reach the same points, and attain the same objects; therefore he no longer insisted upon which road should be taken, provided the end be kept clearly and constantly in view. But with this encreased toleration for the modes of education his faith in the power never was shaken. Far from becoming sceptical his belief in the certainty of its operation encreased and strengthened, and in proportion as his anxiety and exactness about the lesser points decreased, he grew more eager and more attentive to strengthen the great moral principles of action.

As to intellectual education, he had commenced with a belief that there is no considerable difference between the original predispositions of children for one art, science, or study, excepting what may arise

from differences in their organs of sight, hearing, &c. Allowing for these, he doubted that there was any difference in the power of the understanding, or any but what education could equalize. In short, he did not believe in what is called original *genius*. Genius he considered to be the power of invention; and the superiority in this power which appears in some men he attributed to accident, which roused and incited their attention early, and to judicious early culture.

But on longer observation of children, and further experience in education, he could not but be convinced that there is an undeniable difference, not only in the original quickness of the senses, but also in the intellectual powers of attention, conception, imagination, and memory,—memory especially. He had formerly not only attributed all faults of memory to mere want of attention, but had undervalued the faculty, I must say, ungratefully, for Heaven had blest him with a remarkably good memory, and, never having felt the want, he had never sufficiently prized the gift; further, he had been disgusted by the misuse of the faculty in some who call a good memory that which retains dates and historic facts indiscriminately, and merely for pedantic or ostentatious display in writing or conversation. Memory is absolutely essential to the exercise of the invention; memory collects, stores, and retains and recals, at the fit moment, all the facts, ideas, materials, on which Invention works, and on which she can alone work, by *combining*, not *creating*. In this point of view, memory rose to its just value.

And as to the rest, whatever original difference there may or may not be in the natural faculties, the

only question of much importance is, whether deficiencies can be supplied or defects remedied by education. The rest is a merely speculative metaphysic question. That much, if not all, may be done by judicious culture, my father continued to be firmly convinced.

In some few points, however, he altered his opinion as to the early modes of training the attention and cultivating the faculties of children. Formerly he had been shocked by the long lessons in spelling and grammar, &c.; he disapproved of learning *by heart* or by rote; he thought that all these irksome and fatiguing tasks might bring on unconquerable disgust to literature, and for no purpose, since there can be little danger, as he said, that any child of common sense should fail to learn in due time to read, spell, and write a legible hand, or to obtain a quantum suff. of grammar and history. All this is true; but further experience convinced him that what he called useless drudgery, is absolutely necessary to train children early to the habit of labor, and the power of attention, and perseverance, essential to future success or advancement in any profession, in any business in life, or in science, or in literature. And further experience shewed him, that much inconvenience results from pupils having to learn common things at an advanced and unusual period of education. Even though the pupils might perhaps excel in higher exercises of the understanding, and possess superior capacity and taste for knowledge, yet there would be a certain sense of inferiority and shame attendant on the consciousness of ignorance of common things not in themselves valuable. This sense of shame, besides its being a painful feeling, is to be dreaded at the time

when young people are entering the world. It embarrasses them just at the moment when the mind ought to be free and vigorous for the competitions of youth. With pupils who have had a private education this is particularly dangerous. When they first measure themselves with others, the perception of any deficiency, especially any obvious to ridicule, tends to raise a fear that all has been wrong in their education; and in the midst of the fright, and hurry and pressure of immediate business, there is no time or possibility for remedy, or power of recovering self-confidence or self-possession. All possible precautions should therefore be taken, that young people brought up at home should not, on going out into the world, find themselves inferior to others, or be subject to the reproach of having been educated *in some odd way.*

With respect to the choice between private and public education, I find my father's last opinion recorded in a letter to Dr. Rees, editor of Rees's Cyclopedia. These are his own words:—

"I most earnestly deprecate the conclusion that has been drawn from our books, that we recommended in general private education for *boys.*

"We know that it is in general impracticable—and think that it requires an uncommon coincidence of circumstances to make it in any case advisable."

But whether public or private education be pursued, there are some points of domestic preparation as to teaching moral principles and habits, which my father desired strongly to enforce.

For many years of his life he had been under one important mistake. He had believed that if even children, could be made early to see and under-

stand that virtue will render them happy, and that vice will render them miserable, either in this world or in the next, they would, in consequence of this conviction, constantly follow virtue, and avoid vice.

He therefore insisted, in the first place, upon the cultivation of the reasoning faculty, and upon the constant appeal to it in childhood for the government of the child, trusting that thus he might be trained to govern himself when he should become a man.

In the instances which he had known of men who see the best, and yet the worst pursue, he attributed this to some error in their early intellectual training; he supposed that the moral truths had not been well demonstrated to them, and that conviction had never reached their understanding. But alas! resolution is often wanting, where conviction is perfect in theory. Probably, nine times out of ten, vicious conduct arises, not from want of knowledge of good and evil, or from want of conviction that the one leads to happiness and the other to misery, but from actual deficiency in the strength of resolution. Were the demonstration of moral truths clear as the mathematical demonstrations of Euclid they would not, they could not, in perilous moments of passion, control the will, or govern the conduct. It is in vain to expect that resolution should stand in the trials of youth, unless it have been previously practised and strengthened by exercise, from earliest childhood. Unless principle, the habit of submission to the sense of duty, the habit of self control, have been formed from the earliest years, there will be no safety in the time of temptation. All who have observed the human mind, all who have attended to their

own feelings must know, that at the first rising of any passion reason is disturbed; the data suddenly vary; the whole scale of human happiness alters; the very perceptions of pain and pleasure change at once in the fever of the soul. It is during this suspension of reason that habit will act with the power of moral instinct, and safely guide the conduct to the right point.

That these are not mere words, all who have lived long in the world will feel. They must have seen innumerable and fatal instances of the truth of this assertion, that reason, even right reason, can never alone govern human creatures. There must be early formed moral and religious habit of submission to the sense of duty. This is the point which I know my father would have urged with his utmost force, if he had written his last thoughts on Education.

The silence which has been observed in Practical Education on the subject of religion has been misunderstood by some, and misrepresented by others.

To misrepresentation, apparently wilful, and made in acrimonious language of party spirit and intolerance, my father never deigned to reply. But to those, who with upright and benevolent intentions, from a sense of public duty, and in a spirit of Christian charity, made remonstrances on this subject, he thought it due to give all the explanation in his power.

Professor Pictet, of Geneva, was the first, to whose able and kind animadversions in the Bibliothèque Britannique he replied.

The correspondence, which passed between them is prefixed to a French translation of "Practical Education," published at Paris and Geneva in 1800.

In the preface to the second English edition, published in 1801, my father, by whom that preface was written, adverts to M. Pictet's strictures, and concludes with these words —

"The authors continue to preserve the silence upon this subject which they before thought prudent; but they *disavow, in explicit terms, the design of laying down a system of education founded upon morality, exclusive of religion.*"

After this declaration, my father never felt himself called upon to say more upon the subject, till, in 1812, he accidentally met with an admirable article on "*Intellectual Education*," in Rees's Cyclopedia. As we read on, we found in it many expressions so flattering to ourselves, that I should not here venture to mention it, but for the importance of the subject, on which it is necessary to cite the facts.

The following letter of my father speaks for itself.

"SIR, *Edgeworth-Town, Aug.* 18, 1812.

"Having this day seen the article, '*Intellectual Education*' in your Cyclopedia, I cannot delay returning my acknowledgments for the very candid and liberal manner in which 'Practical Education' has been discussed in your dictionary.

"The large mind, which comprehends and directs the magnificent national work in which you are engaged, is every where visible; and we consider, that what would have been only of temporary duration in our book, will now be permanently preserved in yours. I must, however, regret, that an error pervades the whole, which has been adopted by most of our critics, and which we most earnestly deprecate — the imputation of disregarding religion in Education.

"In the French translation of 'Practical Education,' this subject is discussed in the preface, and I beg from your justice, that some occasion may be taken of entering our protest against this charge. We hope, that in 'Professional Education,' under the head 'Clerical Education,' we have evinced a proper sense of the Clerical character, and an enlarged view of religious sanction.

This chapter was written for the Clergy of the Establishment, to which we belong; but our views in 'Practical Education' were not confined to any sect or nation.

"Our private tenets are of little consequence to the public, but we *are convinced, that religious obligation is indispensably necessary in the education of all descriptions of people, in every part of the world.*

"We dread fanaticism and intolerance, whilst we wish to hold religion in a higher point of view, than as a subject of seclusive possession, or of outward exhibition. To introduce the awful ideas of God's superintendence upon puerile occasions, we decline. At the same time, we have not presumed to blame others for acting upon a different persuasion.

"I have the honor to be a member of the Board of Education in Ireland. My opinions on the subject of national education appear in our reports. By these I hope I shall obtain the justice due to me on the subject, and that it will appear, that *I consider religion, in the large sense of the word, to be the only certain bond of society.*"

CHAPTER XVII.

" But grant the virtues of a temperate prime ;
Bless with an age exempt from scorn or crime,
An age that melts in unperceiv'd decay,
And glides in modest innocence away ;
Whose peaceful day benevolence endears,
Whose night congratulating conscience cheers ;
The general fav'rite, as the general friend :
Such age there is, and who could wish its end ?
Yet, ev'n on this her load misfortune flings,
To press the weary minute's flagging wings ;
New sorrow rises as the day returns,
A sister sickens, or a daughter mourns ;
Now kindred merit fills the sable bier,
Now lacerated friendship claims a tear ;
Year chases year, decay pursues decay,
Still drops some joy from withering life away :
New forms arise, and different views engage,
Superfluous lags the veteran on the stage,
Till pitying nature signs the last release,
And bids afflicted worth depart in peace."

These are beautiful lines. But this picture of age, drawn by the master-hand of a great moralist, is darkened by his constitutional melancholy. If the virtues of a temperate prime include energy of character, and habits of useful activity, age may hope to be blessed with more than the negative happiness of being exempt from scorn or crime, something more even than melting in unperceived decay.

In the course of his life, my father had known the weight of misfortune; he had felt what it is to lose the object of the fondest affection; he had submitted to the loss of children, and to the death of friends: year after year, sorrow after sorrow had pressed upon him; but, instead of suffering his mind to fix in ungrateful despair upon the joys which "drop from withering life away," he had, with true gratitude to Providence, enjoyed the blessings which remained, and had resolutely cultivated the promise of another spring. New forms arose, and different views engaged; but these forms were dear, and attached to him by grateful affection, and in all these different views he sympathised and assisted. Never could he know the dreadful feeling of the veteran, who lags superfluous on the stage; for besides his public use and influence in a wide circle of connexions, he was conscious that his large family were continually guided by his experience, excited by his energy, and made happy by kindness, such as a father only can feel or bestow.

As every human being, if he live, must grow old, it cannot be uninteresting to him to know something of the old age of those who have made themselves happy and beloved in the decline of life. My father was a remarkably happy old man. I may therefore dwell upon this period of his life, and observe what circumstances conduced particularly to this happiness. In the first place, I should say it principally arose from his preparing cheerfully to meet old age, instead of letting it overtake him.

When he was about sixty, I recollect his being struck with an expression of a friend much farther advanced in years than himself, the Abbé Morellet.

"I hear people complaining of growing old," said the venerable Abbé, "but for my part, I enjoy the "privileges and comforts, in short, the convenience "of old age (*les commodités de la vieillesse*)."

This amiable, respectable, and respected old man, in some playful lines he wrote on his own birthday, declares, that if the gods were to permit him to return again on earth, in whatever form he might chuse, he should make perhaps the whimsical choice of returning to this world as an old man. Without going quite so far as this, my father was, as he advanced in years, as cheerful, and more serenely happy, than at any previous period. Reflecting upon and comparing his felicity at different ages, he often assured me, that he thought the last thirty years of his life had been the happiest. It is remarkable, that though men, as they advance in years seem so much to regret the past, yet there are few, who, if the offer were made to them, would like to live their lives over again. Of the numbers to whom my father proposed this question, I have never known any person answer in the affirmative. Him alone I have heard repeatedly declare, that, provided he were allowed to correct some faults, he would willingly accept the terms. He could not more strongly mark his conviction, that the sum of good he had enjoyed infinitely surpassed the pain or evil. In his latter years, his children often heard him repeat, that he had been happy in this world beyond his utmost expectations, and that he really thought he had been allowed more than his share of blessings.

In his seventy-first year his flow of spirits, youth of heart, and vigour of intellect promised many years more of life and enjoyment. But it happened, on the

evening of a day when some visitor who saw him for the first time had been struck with his remarkable healthy appearance, and by his enjoyment of that family happiness of which he was the centre and the cause, he was seized by an alarming and painful illness. Long confinement, to him worse than pain, he endured with fortitude,—and more than fortitude,—with constant temper and cheerfulness between every remission of pain.

One morning after a good night's sleep he felt reviving health, he called me to him, and bid me write these words—

" I beg it may be remembered that I now declare, " that all the bodily pain I have felt during this " illness has been overbalanced by the pleasure " of mind I have felt from the kindness of my " friends, and from the delightful feeling of gra- " titude."

At the moment of return to health he observed that this pleasure of renovated strength and health could never have been felt by one who had not been stretched on the bed of sickness, or who had never known the taste of pain; he pointed out to us that though it is the lot of our nature to suffer, yet even from our suffering pain beneficent Providence has ordained that a new pleasure shall arise,—the pleasure of cessation of pain, to which Burke, in his essay on the Sublime and Beautiful, assigns peculiarly the name of *delight.*

The first time he walked out,—it was a fine autumn evening I recollect,—he repeated those well-known lines:

" Fragrant the fertile earth,
After soft showers; and sweet the coming on
Of grateful evening mild."

As he had grown older, he had become more sensible to the beauties of external nature. He took more pleasure in observing the seasons and their change, the influence of the cheerful sun, the refreshing breeze, the song of birds. He enjoyed more all those simple pleasures which are commonly supposed to be felt peculiarly by the young, and to pass away with the first impressions of novelty, or with the first enthusiasm of poetry and romance.

The being capable of returning to these simple pleasures, and enjoying them in age, is, as he remarked, one of the rewards of those, who preserve, with a peaceful conscience, minds untainted by avarice or ambition, and undisturbed by any malignant passions.

One evening after having repeatedly said, "how I enjoy my existence!" he observed, that Dr. Darwin was right in asserting, that a sense of pleasure is annexed to the mere feeling of existence; and that this, independently of other causes, creates an attachment to life, encreasing with habit, instead of diminishing and fading, like other enjoyments, with the charm of novelty. From the same habit of belief, which leads us to expect, that the sun which rose yesterday will rise to-morrow, old men continue to believe, that they shall live to-morrow, as they have lived to-day. And though increasing infirmities, or the frequency of the deaths of those of the same age, warn the old, that they cannot last beyond a certain term; yet the mere irrational habit prevails so far, as to counteract much of that apprehension, which might otherwise embitter the latter years of life.

These truths my father pointed out to us, as some

of the beautiful provisions, which have been made in our nature for the tranquillity of age. Whatever he said on such subjects came with peculiar force from one who was free from all affectation; his words carried with them perfect conviction of the truth of his feelings.

The same moralist, who described the decline of life in such melancholy strains, has said, that no man adds much to his stock of knowledge, or in short improves much, after forty. Of this assertion my father always doubted the truth, and he opposed the principle, as injurious to the cause of knowledge and virtue, and tending to lessen the energy and happiness of a large portion of human existence. From forty to threescore years and ten, the ordinary limits of the age of man, comprises above a third part of his life, during which his intellect would be by this principle condemned to remain stationary, or to become retrograde. Every instance to the contrary is encouraging and useful to humanity; and such my father loved to recollect and record; his own example may now be added to the number.

As the preceding account of his life shews, it was during the last thirty years, from forty to seventy, that he exerted himself most constantly and effectually in useful public undertakings, contributed most to literature and science, and most improved in the art of education; the subject to which he had from early youth devoted the greatest share of his attention. Above all other excellences he valued for himself, and for his friends, this power of improving. He used to say, that with it they might in time be any thing, and without it in time they would be nothing.

One day, in searching with my father for some papers, I found some old sheets of a commonplace book, which he had kept when he was a very young man. He looked at the pages with an expression of extreme pleasure in his countenance, for, as he said, they recalled to him most agreeable associations, with the time, when he first strongly felt the delight of voluntary study, when he could say at the end of each day, that he had added something new to his stock of knowledge, or had in some respect improved himself. The same habit of mind continued through life. He was proud of shewing, that he could in advanced age acquire new knowledge, or correct any habit or fault, trifling or serious. He often assured his children, and, more than asserted, demonstrated by his daily practice, that it was his ambition to improve, even to the latest hour of life. To this desire, early formed, he ascribed a great portion of his peculiar happiness in age.

In his own account of his childhood, he has said that his temper was not only warm, but violent. The natural warmth continued, but the violence was completely subdued. Upon trifling occasions, perhaps, he sometimes spoke hastily; but when he felt serious displeasure, or what might have broken out into anger, if uncontrolled, he became silent, still, and composed.

All the powers of his soul and body seemed to be concentered in restraining the passion. He found this absolute refraining from speech or action, the most effectual mode of conquering anger.

But this silence was imposed upon himself, to command, — not to conceal his feelings. He never retained any obscure remains of dissatisfaction, nor

of any kind of mental reservation. All who lived with him were secure, that he never was displeased, without letting them know it. If they were in any doubt as to the cause, they had only to ask, and were sure of hearing, not the evasive replies of "Nothing of any consequence,"—or "Why should you think I was displeased?"—but the truth, the plain truth, and the whole truth. So that every dependant, or inferior, was certain of being allowed full opportunity of vindication and justice; and every friend, time for explanation, with a heart open in their favor. He used to say, that all he asked of his friends was to suppose, that he meant kindly, till it was proved that he meant unkindly; and he did the same by them.

This sincerity he thought not only necessary to the general confidence, that ought to subsist in a family, but beneficial to the temper. Those who have the courage to bear the shame of telling the petty causes of their displeasure, or who, in more important cases, can own themselves in the wrong, will, he thought, have the resolution to correct their faults of temper; and will, by such candor, be secure of holding the esteem and regard of every friend worth preserving.

His care in the cultivation of his understanding was unremitting, as well as in the management of his temper. In advanced age he exerted himself to prevent any of his faculties from sinking into the torpid state, which precedes and portends their decay. His power of memory was naturally good, but as age advanced he felt that *difficulty* of recollecting names and dates which is the first symptom of failure of the faculties. He exerted himself to

counteract as far as possible this defect; for this purpose it was necessary to repress the anxiety and impatience which naturally seizes upon the mind, and increases the difficulties. This he found of essential service.

Some passages on the management of the memory in declining life, in Dugald Stewart's life of Reid, were highly useful to him, and will be found interesting to all who look for them. He assisted his memory so much by reasoning and arrangement, and strengthened it so much by exertion — that it became in age more alert and vigorous even than it had been in youth.

But though he succeeded in preventing the decay of his mental powers, he could not avert the inevitable doom. He was taken dangerously ill. In the winter of 1815 we went to Dublin, where he had the best medical advice; he was under the care of Surgeon-general (now Sir Philip) Crampton, whose great talents he had always highly admired; and on whose skill in his profession, and kindness as a friend, he had perfect reliance. But all that kindness, and all that skill could do, were tried in vain. The digestive organs were impaired beyond the restoring power of the art of medicine.

From the very commencement of this illness, it was my father's presentiment, that he might linger a few months, that perhaps his existence might be prolonged a year or two; but that there could not be expectation of recovery, or of any permanent enjoyment of ease or health. This opinion, which was not contradicted by his medical friend, did not diminish the wonderful cheerfulness and activity of my father's

mind. His intellectual energy seemed to increase, as his bodily powers weakened; and he pursued his usual occupations with extraordinary zeal.

Previous to this illness, he had been occupied in trying some experiments on wheel-carriages. The same which he had formerly wished to have tried in England, at Woburn. This had been a favorite scientific object of considerable public utility, in which he had persevered during a great number of years, and which he anxiously desired to complete, having always before his conscience the early admonition given, the principle early instilled and followed to the last, to *finish* whatever he began.

He had engaged to try a set of public experiments for the Dublin Society, and with the assistance of his son William he fulfilled his engagement, and accomplished his object. In April 1815, and in May 1816, he tried in Dublin a set of experiments on wheel-carriages, of which an account is before the public.* At this time he went through a degree of fatigue, which no one who knew how ill he was, no one indeed who saw him, could have conceived that his state of health could endure.

He returned home, in such a dreadful state of suffering and weakness, as left us little reason for hope. Yet there was so much animation in his manner, such firmness and strength in his voice — we saw him revive so wonderfully in every interval of sickness, and make such exertions in every intermission of pain, that we could not believe the body was failing, while the soul was so full of life and energy. But he was well aware of his imminent danger, he

* In the second Edition of his "Essay on Wheel-Carriages."

never deceived us or himself with false hopes. Nor did he ever for a moment repine, even when, from the loss of sight, he was deprived of all power of independent occupation.

He thanked God, for the blessings still left to him, and with resignation and gentle tenderness, most striking in one of his vivacious temper, and independent habits and character, he submitted, as he said, *willingly* to become dependent on the kindness of his friends and children.

His greatest anxiety during his whole illness was to prevent his wife from wearing herself out, by her unceasing exertions. He expressed a constant fear of being spoiled by her extreme kindness; for he had observed, that men are apt to grow selfish in long sickness, and at last to expect as a right, or to receive without gratitude as a tribute, or a duty, all the continually recurring little efforts of affection and attention. Not a day, scarcely an hour passed, without his giving her some proof of his care in watching over himself, lest he should fall into this error.

"The smallest service merits thanks," he used to repeat; and his thanks never being mere words of course, or appearing to be uttered as acquittances for kindness, were ever agreeable and touching.

After days and nights of sickness and pain, such as would have incapacitated any common mind, my father, in the intervals of ease, listened with inconceivable interest and energy to reading; or dictated letters.

The following may give proofs of the clearness of his head.

Some circumstances recalling to his mind the time

of the union between England and Ireland, he dictated the following addition to his former remarks on the subject.

" 7th June 1817.

* * * * * * * *

* * * * * * * *

" If ever any country was governed by an oligarchy, Ireland was in this situation before the union.

" The only plausible argument that has been produced in favor of venal boroughs, is, that by their means men of high talents obtain seats in parliament, from which, if they had not friends in the aristocracy, they would necessarily be excluded. This might for some little time be the case, but the necessity of employing talent would soon be felt, and men of abilities would be chosen for counties instead of being put in for boroughs.

" A contrary system leads to the conversion of politics into a lucrative trade. If it should ever be the case, that men cannot be found to fill the higher offices of government, without being paid as in a profession, the spirit of the English nation will evaporate. Men will then be found to advocate every cause, and to advocate with ability; but love of the country and national glory will be considered as schoolboy, obsolete themes, foreign to the purposes of omnipotent parliament. Some reform in the House of Commons is necessary, and will in time be effected; but this must begin by a reform among the people. The petty electioneering views and expectations of voters are more corrupt, than the designs of the most artful demagogue, that ever obtained a seat in parliament.

" A complete reform in the Irish system of representation actually took place at the union; what its effects may be in checking the influence of the crown, time alone can determine: but there is every reason to suppose, that it will necessarily produce a superior race of representatives, because the representative body must be chosen from men, who have had all the advantages of a liberal education, and all the independence which affluence can confer.

" As I have formerly mentioned, it was at the time of the union in my power, to have followed the career of ambition. I might have obtained a seat in the imperial parliament, and might have

dedicated the remainder of my life to what is fondly called the good of my country; or which, under this name, is often meanly pursued, *the advancement of my family and fortune.*

" I now feel most sincerely grateful to Providence, for having given me sufficient prudence and resolution, to resist these temptations, to follow a different course, to cultivate my estate, to improve my tenantry, and to educate my children.

" How far I have been successful in these pursuits, it is not for me to determine; but there is one enjoyment, of which it is impossible to deprive me; *the consciousness of having endeavoured to do well.*

" I dictate what I am now writing, in my seventy-fourth year, in my bed, to which I am nearly confined by a lingering disease; and I would not at this instant exchange the satisfaction which I feel from the attachment of any one of my numerous children, for the largest fortune, or the highest title, that is possessed by the most powerful statesman in the empire."

The following was addressed to the Minister of Louis the Eighteenth, at the time when the public papers announced, that a monument was erecting in France, to the memory of Marie Antoinette and Louis the Sixteenth.

TO MONS. DE CAZE.

" SIR, *Edgeworth-Town.*

" As it has fallen to your lot, to discover the last writings of the magnanimous Marie Antoinette, and as every heart in Europe is touched by these remains of fallen greatness, I beseech you to turn, at this moment of sympathy, the attention of your countrymen, to the merit of the man, whom Louis the XVIth chose for the depositary of his latest will and wishes, and whom Marie Antoinette calls her friend, and appoints to be her Executor.

" As the nearest relation of the Abbé Edgeworth, I claim from the justice of France, that his name should be inscribed on some public monument, with those of the exalted personages, who

relied for consolation on his fidelity and courage. The records of illustrious actions do not perish with brass and marble—they live in the page of history; but even the fragile memorials of art will teach the present and some future generations this rare lesson: That monarchs may have friends, and that princes can be grateful.

" R. L. EDGEWORTH."

This letter to Lady Romilly was dictated to me by my father, four days before his death—spoken with the strength of voice of a person in perfect health, and without hesitating or changing a word.

" MY DEAR MADAM, *June* 8, 1817.

" I have a strange habit, for which I fear you will not pardon me, of snatching the pen from my daughter Maria, when she is going to write to you. But I will not fill the whole paper with my dotage.

" Formerly it was the fashion, to write under the title of 'Letters from the Dead to the Living.' I think letters from the dying, to those who are in full vigor, might perhaps be full as instructive. But then, who is there that has courage to speak the truth?—Superstition and bigotry press upon the enfeebled mind, and enhance the instinctive terror of death. If a careful retrospect be made of former life; if the faults which we have committed strike us with regret, and if we do sincerely believe that we should avoid them were we to live over again; and if upon the whole we feel the internal conviction, that we have exerted our faculties in the exercise of our domestic duties, and, as far as it has been in our power, for the public good, I do believe, that the descent to the grave, if we can escape bodily pain, may resemble sinking to a sweet sleep. I am now confined to my bed for the greatest part of the day. I suffer considerable pain, and almost constant sickness; and yet my mind retains its natural cheerfulness. I enjoy the charms of literature, the sympathy of friendship, and the unbounded gratitude of my children. * * * * * * and I, with the most true submission of the heart, feel silently grateful to Providence, for permitting my body to die before my mind.

" When I consider what I have just said, I feel that I place myself in rather an awkward situation. What right have I to call up before your Ladyship, who are in the full enjoyment of

every happiness the world can bestow, melancholy ideas, which relate to a person who has very little claim to your attention? And yet I never could consider your Ladyship as a common acquaintance who took us up from fashion, and would lay us down from caprice.

"We are heartily sorry for Lord L * * * * * * *'s illness. I look upon his Lordship to be a first rate *gentleman*; and *I* am inclined to think that the understanding of the lady is in no way inferior to his.

"The little Dramas, which you mention, are inferior performances, upon which I assure you we set but small value. They however sell well, which we are glad of, on our publisher's account. In a few days I hope you will receive Maria's new Tales. I do acknowledge, that I set a high value upon them. They have cheered the lingering hours of my illness; and they have—I speak literally—given me more hours of pleasure during my confinement, than could well be imagined from the nature of my illness.

* * * * * * * * *

"I am, my dear Madam,

"With great respect, your obliged servant,

"R. L. E."

Five days after this letter was written, the writer of it was no more!——His prayer, that he might preserve as long as he lived his intellectual faculties, was granted. To the last they continued clear, vigorous, energetic; and to the last were exerted in doing good, and in fulfilling every duty, public and private.—The strength of his understanding, such as it had been while in perfect health, with more than all that we ever knew of the tenderness of his heart, poured forth with the last efforts of life in his parting words of counsel and consolation to each of his family.

In his last hours his bodily sufferings subsided; and in the most serene and happy state, he said,

before he sunk to that sleep from which he never wakened —

"I die with the soft feeling of gratitude to my friends, and submission to the God who made me."

He died the 13th of June, 1817.

It remains with his children to do honor to his memory.

The following were my father's directions concerning his burial, left in writing, addressed to his sons, who were his executors.

"I desire, that I may be buried in as private a manner, and at as little expense as possible. I have always endeavoured to discountenance the desire, which the people of this country have for expensive funerals. I would have neither velvet, nor plate, nor gilding employed in making my coffin, which I would have carried to the grave, without a hearse, by my own laborers.

"I desire, that no monument or inscription, but one precisely similar to that which I have erected for my father, should be erected for me."

His orders were obeyed. His coffin, without velvet, plate, or gilding, and without a hearse, was carried to the grave by his own laborers. There was the most respectful and profound silence. His remains were deposited in the family vault in the churchyard of Edgeworth Town. No monument or inscription, but one precisely similar to that which he had erected for his father, has been erected for him—a plain marble tablet within the church, bearing his name, and the date of his birth and death.

List of Essays of Mr. Edgeworth's which have appeared in different periodical publications.

Philosophical Transactions.

Essay on the Resistance of the Air.	vol. lxxiii.—1783.
Account of a Meteor.	vol. lxxiv.—1784

Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy.

Essay on Springs and Wheel-Carriages. . .	vol. ii.—1788.
Essay on the Telegraph.	vol. vi.—1795.

Monthly Magazine.

On the engraving of Bank of England Notes.	vol. xii.—1801.

Nicholson's Journal.

Essay on Rail-Roads.	vol. i.—1801.
Description of an Odometer for a Carriage. .	vol. xv.—1806.
Remarks on Mr. Ryan's Boring-Machine. . .	vol. xv.—1806.
On the Construction of Theatres.	vol. xxiii.—1809.
On Telegraphic Communication.	vol. xxvi.—1810.
On roofing Longford Jail with flag-stones. .	vol. xxix.—1811.
Description of a new Spire.	vol. xxx.—1811.
On Portland Stone, as a covering for the Spire.	vol. xxxi.—1812.
On Aerial Navigation.	vol. xlvii.—1816.
On Wheel-Carriages.	vol. xlviii.—1816.
Letter from Z.	vol. xlix.—1817.

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